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ABSTRACT

This guide for elementary students will help them learn about five of South and Southwest Philadelphia's ethnic groups and examine their own ethnic heritage. These groups are: Afro Americans, Irish Americans, Italian Americans, Jewish Americans, and Polish Americans. The guide has different sections. "Hearsay" sections contain short stories based on facts and interviews. By reading these stories students learn a little about the history and heritage of each ethnic group. "History at a Glance" sections contain brief historical descriptions of each ethnic group. "History" sections tell about the culture of each ethnic group. Students learn about what makes each ethnic group unique and special. "Learning Activities" help students find out more about their own ethnic group, neighborhood, and family. Students keep a diary, make posters, play the ethnic name baseball game, trace the ethnic history of their neighborhood, conduct oral history interviews, and cook ethnic food. (Author/RM)

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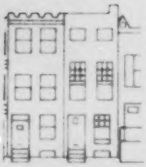

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HISTORY, HERITAGE, AND HEARSAY

A Children's Guide to Ethnic South and Southwest Philadelphia

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Ethnic Heritage Studies Project

SO 013 690

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Introduction

History, Heritage, and Hearsay is a book for you to read and use. It will help you find out more about South and Southwest Philadelphia and five of their ethnic groups:

- Afro-Americans
- Irish-Americans
- Italian-Americans
- Jewish-Americans
- Polish-Americans

Each of these ethnic groups has a unique history and heritage. *History, Heritage, and Hearsay* will help you find out more about their histories and heritages as well as about the many contributions each group has made to our city.

History, Heritage, and Hearsay will help you find out more about South and Southwest Philadelphia, too. You will learn why each of these neighborhoods is special. You'll also find out how the ethnic groups living there today continue to give those neighborhoods their own special flair.

Best of all, *History, Heritage, and Hearsay* will help you find out more about yourself and your own ethnic heritage. It will help you learn more about your neighborhood and city, too. After reading this book and doing some of the activities it suggests, you will understand how your ethnic heritage, your neighborhood, and your city all work together to influence your life.

This book has different sections.

- *Hearsay* sections are short stories based on facts and interviews. Each helps you learn a little about the history and heritage of an ethnic group.
- *History at a Glance* sections are brief historical descriptions of an ethnic group.
- *History* sections are more detailed descriptions of each ethnic group's experiences.
- *Heritage* sections tell about the culture of each ethnic group. You'll find out about many of the things that make each ethnic group unique and special.
- *Learning Activities* help you learn about yourself. They help you find out more about your own ethnic group, neighborhood, and family, too. Each learning activity has

things for you to do *HERE* and things for you to do *IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.*

When you finish working with *History, Heritage, and Hearsay*, you will:

- know more about your own ethnic group
- know more about other ethnic groups
- know more about your neighborhood
- know more about other neighborhoods
- understand people from other ethnic groups and neighborhoods better
- want to learn more about all the ethnic groups and neighborhoods of Philadelphia.

Before you begin, think about this:

- What is an ethnic group?
- What is your ethnic group?
- Do you belong to more than one ethnic group?

Me, Myself, and I: Making Identity Collages

Everyone has at least three identities. We all have a personal identity. Our personal identity is made up of all the things about us that make us special, different from anyone else. We all have an ethnic identity. Some of us may have more than one ethnic identity. Our ethnic identity is made up of all the things we share with others in our ethnic group or groups. These things make us similar to everyone in the ethnic group, but different from those in other ethnic groups. Finally, we all have a human identity. Our human identity is made up of all the things about us that make us similar to every other human.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Do we have any other identities?
- Can we have more than one ethnic identity?

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Collect things for identity collages.

1. Collect things that show each of your identities. Collect things that show your personal identity. Collect things that show your ethnic and human identities, too. Collect magazine pictures, newspaper clippings, personal photos. Collect anything that shows your identities.
2. Make three folders, one for each identity. Put the things you collect for each identity into a separate folder.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Do some things show more than one identity?

HERE

Make identity collages.

1. Ask someone to make three shadow profiles of your head. Tape paper to the wall. Stand between the paper and a light. Stand so your head casts a shadow on the paper. Have someone trace your shadow. Have her or him do it three times.
2. Paste your clippings, photos, and pictures inside the outlines. Make collages. Make one collage for each of your identities.
3. Display everyone's collages.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Is anyone else's personal identity collage similar to yours?
- Is anyone else's ethnic identity collage similar to yours? Is anyone else's very much different from yours?
- How are human identity collages similar? How are they different?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

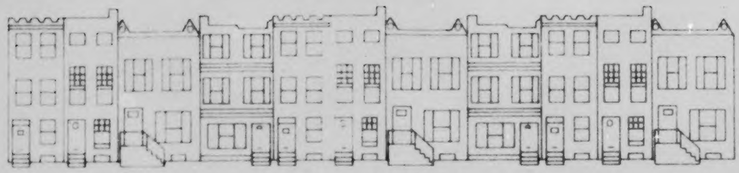
Do these alone or with others.

Make personal identity collages for others.

1. Make a personal identity collage for someone in your family. Ask them to help you choose things that show his or her personal identity.
2. Make a personal identity collage for someone famous. Read about someone famous. Choose things that you think show his or her personal identity.

Make ethnic identity collages for other ethnic groups.

1. Collect things that you think show how that ethnic group is special and different from other ethnic groups. Collect things that you think all members of that ethnic group share.



Proud to Be Black

Rita and Delores are sitting in the living room of a small house on Fitzwater Street. It belongs to Mr. Jesse Johnson. They are interviewing him for a social studies project. Mr. Johnson's grandfather was once a slave. The girls have chosen to interview Mr. Johnson because he is over eighty years old, the oldest person on the block. He is also a good storyteller.

The girls are a little nervous, but before long Mr. Johnson puts them at ease.

Mr. Johnson: It isn't often that young people want to hear what we old folks have to say. It's really nice to have someone listen to you for a change.

Rita: Well, we had our choice between reading a book or interviewing somebody. We thought it would be more interesting to talk to someone.

Delores: We've never interviewed anybody before, so, we wrote up a list of questions. We're supposed to find out what it was like to be an Afro-American in Philadelphia in the old days.

Mr. Johnson: Well, you've got the right person. I grew up in South Philadelphia and I love to talk. Shoot!

Delores: Mr. Johnson, how far back does your family go?

Mr. Johnson: Let's see... I guess the original Johnsons came from Africa. Only, I'm sure their names weren't Johnson. Johnson was my grandfather's name. I think he took it from his owner. You see, my granddaddy was born a slave in Mississippi, but he escaped. He came North about the time of the Civil War. His stories would set your hair on end. He would tell how he was treated badly. He got into all kinds of trouble. He escaped five or six times. They caught him five or six times, too. Finally, he came north on the Underground Railroad. You know, it wasn't really a railroad. It was like an escape route. People took in the runaway slaves and hid them. They hid them in house after house until the slaves were safe in the North. Lots of folks—black and white, too—took chances doing this. They risked being arrested and getting their homes burned down. Even in the North folks didn't like it if you got too involved in helping slaves.

Anyhow, once he got to Philadelphia, he hid out until he could find a job. He worked downtown as a janitor for PSFS, the savings and loan society. He married a freed woman. Her name was Harriet Williams. Her family had been free a long time; since the Revolutionary War, I think. Harriet's grandfather fought for American freedom in that war. The Williams family had money. Harriet's father ran a printing press. They about disowned her when she married my granddaddy. They wanted her to go to college and marry a doctor or something. They certainly didn't want her to marry a janitor—a runaway slave, at that.

Rita: Your family sure has been here a lot longer than mine, Mr. Johnson. Mine didn't come to the United States until 1912.

Mr. Johnson: Well, honey, most black folks have family trees that go way back. Some go back two or three hundred years in America.

Delores: Mine does. My great-great-grandmother was a slave. I guess her parents were slaves, too.

Mr. Johnson: I never knew much about my great-grandparents. My granddaddy said they were sold to different folks when he was a boy. He lost track of them after that. Some day, we'll find out where they went!

Rita: What was it like in Philadelphia when you were growing up, Mr. Johnson?

Mr. Johnson: I can't speak for everybody, but my life was hard. My daddy didn't make much money. He drove a delivery wagon. He delivered meat from the slaughterhouses near the docks to the butcher shops. Momma had to work, too. She ran a luncheonette in our kitchen. All six kids worked there after school. We waited on tables and we washed dishes. But Momma didn't make much with that luncheonette. There was barely enough money to pay for food with some left over to pay for coal. We didn't worry about being poor, though, Everybody we knew was poor. At least we had a house. My grandmomma's family gave it to her before they disowned her. It was a nice house, too. It had three coal fireplaces, one on each floor. In those days, most black folks couldn't find a decent place to live. We could only live in certain parts of Philadelphia. Those were the days of segregation. This was around the time of the First World War. A whole lot of black folks were coming north, looking for the good life. They called it the Great Black Migration. It was crowded all over South Philadelphia then, but black neighborhoods were really crowded. Our family took in an aunt and uncle and their four kids when they came here. And we only had four rooms in our house. So, you know we were crowded. Poor and crowded—that was what we were.

Delores: What did you do for fun when you were young?

Mr. Johnson: We sure didn't hang around the house. We did a lot in the streets. You know, the usual stuff kids do. Me and my brother, Jake, liked to play jokes. We were great jokesters. Most of the time, though, the joke was on us—like the fish joke. One time we hid a dead fish behind some books at school. That fish smelled so bad they had to let class out early. But, like I said, the joke was on us. When my daddy found out, he gave us a whippin'. We couldn't sit down for a week. Daddy wanted us to be serious about school. He always told us school helps you be somebody. He wanted us to get a good education. Said it was something no one could take away from us. I think he felt cheated because he never could go to school. The only school he was allowed to go to was way across town. He couldn't afford the trip.

Delores: Weren't there any schools closer?

Mr. Johnson: Sure there were. But they were for whites only. They were segregated.

Back to having fun—we used to go fishing a lot. We caught catfish in the Schuylkill and river bass in the Delaware. We also used to ride the subway out to the end of the line if we had any money. The subway was new then. We put on school plays and went to school dances. We sneaked into the movies sometimes. They were silent movies; no talking and no sound except the piano player. He sat in front of the screen and played piano music to the movie. I loved that piano player.

Delores: Did you graduate from high school?

Mr. Johnson: I graduated alright, but I didn't learn too much. It was my own fault. I was young and didn't take it seriously. I just wasn't interested. I also couldn't see the point. I was sure no white folks would care how much schooling I had. Based on the way things were in Philadelphia in those days, I was right. Not many black folks had good jobs, no matter how long they went to school.

I learned more on my own later. I read a lot and I went to night school. I learned to be a carpenter at night school. Before I retired, that's what I was—a carpenter. I made that chair you're sitting on. I fixed up this house, too; did a lot of repairs.

Rita: I can see by all the records and your piano that you like music. Did you like music when you were growing up?

Mr. Johnson: I loved it. I loved it almost as much as being a carpenter. Carpentry and music were just about my whole life. I can't remember a time when I wasn't singing or playing. I must have gotten it from my momma. She was always singing spirituals and opera songs. Daddy couldn't carry a tune, but he liked to listen. He bought Momma a piano so he could listen to her sing and play. She taught me how to play. I got started singing and playing in church. I played in that church right across the street. Then I got a job playing at the movies. I got real good. Then I learned how to play jazz. After that, jazz was my life. I played in every club in Philadelphia. I played with all the greats, too. I made good money playing jazz. I used to help the family. But, then I got my own family, and I had to settle down. I still play, but just for myself and my friends.

Rita: My dad has a thing about jazz, too. I don't understand it. I'd rather listen to rock and roll.

Delores: Mr. Johnson, what has changed the most since you were young?

Mr. Johnson: Shoot, honey, everything's changed. When I was young, cars were a new thing. Only rich folks had cars. There wasn't any T.V. Folks stayed around the neighborhood more. We never went downtown, never went to center city. That's where the white folks lived. You see, in the old days, blacks and whites didn't mix much. There were laws against mixing and most folks didn't think it was a good idea. Maybe that's the biggest change—no more segregation laws. No, I think the biggest change is the way black people feel about themselves. Today, black pride is real important to all of us. In my house we were always proud. My parents saw to that. My momma always told us to be proud of our African history and heritage. And Daddy could tell stories about all kinds of black heroes. He said he knew most of them. Not all blacks were proud in those days, though. Some were kind of beaten down, you know. Even if you were proud, you sort of kept it to yourself—especially around some white folks. In the days I grew up, most white folks didn't like to hear that you were proud to be black. I guess it scared them. And there was no telling what scared whites would do. Shoot! They used to lynch black folks in those days; burn their houses, too.

Rita: What about the laws and the police?

Mr. Johnson: Well, honey, there were white laws and black laws. In those days, if a black man got robbed or killed, it was a shame. If a white man got robbed or killed, it was a crime. The laws weren't fair and a lot of people weren't fair either.

Civil rights and black power changed all that. Black folks discovered they had a lot to be proud about. And a lot of white folks discovered they didn't have to be afraid of black pride or black equality. Shoot! Civil rights and black power helped our people a whole lot. Blacks who had been afraid to stand up got over their fear. They stopped being afraid to stand up for their rights. Blacks who had always stood up suddenly had a lot of company. Blacks stood together and they worked together. They got some results, too. I wish my momma and daddy could see it. I think they'd like how you kids study Afro-American history in school best.

Rita: I can't think of anything else to ask. I guess we're about done.

Mr. Johnson: I'm about done, too. Hope you took good notes. I wouldn't want you to leave anything out.

Delores: We won't. We promise. But we'd like you to do one more thing for us, please.

Mr. Johnson: Sure, we're friends now.

Rita: Please play the piano for us.

Mr. Johnson: How about that! Feel like listening to my piano playing for a while, eh? I'll bet I can change your mind about jazz! You know, jazz is part of Afro-American heritage. You should know about it, little sister. And *you* should learn about it, honey.

A Day at a Time: Keeping a Diary

What happened to you yesterday? Do you remember? What has happened to you today? Sometimes it is hard to remember all the things that happened to us.

A diary helps us remember. A diary is a record of our daily life. It is a personal history. In a diary we write about things that happen to us. We write about things that interest us each day. A diary helps us look at our own life.

A diary can help us look at our ethnic identity, too. Sometimes ethnic identity influences our life. It influences things that happen to us. It influences things that are important. It influences us every day. A diary can help us see how our ethnic identity influences our life.

Diaries are interesting and fun. It is interesting to read diaries and see how things have changed. It is fun to see how things used to be. It is interesting and fun to look at our own past.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Has your life changed in the past year? How?
- Will your life change in the next year? How?
- How do you think your ethnic identity has influenced your life in the past year?

Make a personal diary.

HERE

1. Make the pages for a month-long personal diary. Put a date on each page. Put the name of the day on each page, too. Use a calendar to make sure of your days and dates.

continued

continued

2. Leave pages for pictures or drawings. Pictures and drawings can be part of your diary.
3. Make a cover. Write your name on it. Write the name of the month on it, too.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- When will you write in your diary? Every night? Before dinner?
- What will you write in your diary?

Keep a personal diary.

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

1. Keep a diary for a month. Write something in it each day.
2. Describe what you did. Write what happened to you. Make a special note of things that were interesting or important to you. Tell why they were interesting and important to you. Tell if your ethnic identity influences your daily life.
3. Add pictures to your diary. Add drawings or photographs that show what happens to you.
4. At the end of a month, read your diary. Compare your life as it is today to your life a month ago.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Has your life changed during the last month? How?
- Has your ethnic identity influenced your life during the last month?

Do these alone or with others.

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Continue to keep a personal diary.

1. Continue to record what you do each day. Continue to note what is interesting and important.
2. Every now and then, look back to see how things have changed.

Read other diaries.

1. Go to the library. Look for these books:
   - — *The Diary of Anne Frank* by Anne Frank
   - — *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Malcolm X and Alex Haley
   - — *I, Jaun de Pareja* by Elizabeth Borton de Trevino
   - — *Twenty-Five Years in the Secret Service: The Recollections of a Spy* by Henri LeCorone.
2. Ask the librarian to help you find other diaries.

Make up a personal diary.

1. Pretend you are living 10 years ago.
2. Describe your day. Describe things you might have done 10 years ago.
3. Make a special note of things you do that are interesting or important. Tell why they are interesting or important. Tell how your ethnic identity influences your daily life.
4. Add pictures, either drawings or photographs.

Keep a picture diary.

1. Use only drawings, photographs, or other pictures to show what happens. Use them to show what's important and interesting too.
2. You may need to make captions for the pictures.

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The Philadelphia Afro-Americans

History at a Glance

Because of their history as slaves, and because of the color of their skin, Afro-Americans are a unique ethnic group.

Many of the first blacks who came to America were not slaves. As white Americans came to depend on cheap black labor, blacks lost their freedom and became slaves.

Slaves in Pennsylvania worked on small farms and in factories. A slave's life was a hard life.

Blacks fought for America's freedom and in 1780 a law was passed to end slavery in Pennsylvania. Seventy years went by, though, before there were no more slaves in the state.

There has been an Afro-American community in Philadelphia since the Revolutionary War.

Blacks lived everywhere in Philadelphia. There was a large Afro-American community in South Philadelphia.

Afro-Americans held many different kinds of jobs, but most were laborers and servants.

Although after 1850 they were not slaves, Philadelphia's blacks were not really free, either. Laws and customs kept them from having the same rights and opportunities as whites.

Free blacks in Philadelphia formed many groups to fight discrimination.

Black churches were very important institutions for Philadelphia's Afro-Americans.

Because of discrimination against them, few blacks in Philadelphia were able to go to school. They got their education in other ways.

Philadelphia Afro-Americans were active in the anti-slavery movement and in the Underground Railroad.

Laws were passed to give rights to Afro-Americans, but the laws were not always followed.

Thousands of blacks came to Philadelphia at about the time of World War I. They were looking for better jobs and less discrimination.

During this time there were few good jobs for Afro-Americans. Because of discrimination, they were denied many opportunities.

South Philadelphia's black neighborhoods expanded. Housing conditions in these neighborhoods were poor.

Segregation and the need to earn money prevented many black children from going to public schools.

In some ways, the black migrants' experiences were like the white immigrants' experiences. The blacks, however, faced stronger, more violent discrimination than the whites did.

Afro-Americans still migrate to Philadelphia looking for a better life.

The Civil Rights and Black Power movements helped many Philadelphia blacks improve their lives. Today, a political movement is helping even more.

Today Afro-Americans are Philadelphia's largest ethnic group. While many live in South and Southwest Philadelphia, few live in the original black neighborhoods. Although there are many success stories in the city's black community, life is still hard for most black Philadelphians.

Background

Because of their history as slaves, and because of the color of their skin, Afro-Americans are a unique ethnic group.

The largest ethnic group in the United States is made up of black Americans. Many blacks want to be called Afro-Americans because their ancestors came from Africa. The ethnic experience of Afro-Americans is different from the ethnic experience of other groups such as the Irish, the Poles, or the Jews. One important difference is that Afro-Americans came to America as slaves. Most ethnic immigrants came to America voluntarily. Afro-Americans did not. They were brought against their will. Another difference is the color of Afro-Americans' skin. These two differences have played a great part in the story of Philadelphia's Afro-Americans.

Early History

Many of the first blacks who came to America were not slaves. As white Americans came to depend on cheap black labor, blacks lost their freedom and became slaves.

It is hard to trace the earliest history of Afro-Americans. There are few records to show exactly where they came from. The ancestors of most Afro-Americans probably came from West Africa. Today, countries such as Nigeria and Ghana are in West Africa.

The first blacks to reach America came with the early explorers. The navigator of one of Columbus's ships, Pedro Alanzo Nino, was black. The first blacks to actually make their homes in the American colonies came to Jamestown, Virginia in 1619. A few blacks came to Pennsylvania with the early white settlers in 1682. William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, owned slaves.

For about the first 40 years, most blacks did not come to America as slaves. They came as indentured servants. Indentured servants had to work for a certain number of years to pay off the cost of their travel here. Then they were freed. As more blacks came to America, they lost their freedom. Americans came to depend on the free labor of the blacks. Blacks no longer came as indentured servants but as slaves. Laws were passed to limit the freedom of blacks, both slave and free.

Slave holding reached its peak in Pennsylvania in about 1760, before the Revolutionary War. About 6,000 slaves lived in the state of Pennsylvania at this time. Most slaves lived in the southern United States.

CONDITIONS OF SLAVERY

Slaves in Pennsylvania worked on small farms and in factories. A slave's life was a hard life.

Slavery in Pennsylvania was not as important as it was in the South. There were not many slave owners in Pennsylvania. Most slaves worked on farms. A few worked in industries. In Philadelphia, slaves worked in factories making iron.

Slaves usually lived in their masters' houses. Although slaves in Pennsylvania were generally well-treated, slave life was still very difficult. Slaves had to work hard and they received no pay. Their masters gave them only food and clothing. Slaves had no rights. They were treated like property. They were owned and they had to do as their owners wished. Many Pennsylvania slaves were unhappy and ran away when they could.

STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY—REVOLUTIONARY WAR PERIOD

Blacks fought for America's freedom and in 1780 a law was passed to end slavery in Pennsylvania. Seventy years went by, though before there were no more slaves in the state.

From the beginning, slaves wanted to be free. The Revolutionary War made many Americans sympathetic to them. They likened the blacks' desire for freedom to their own. Many people felt that the slaves should be freed when America became free from England. Then, all Americans would be free.

Many blacks fought as soldiers in the Revolutionary War, the American war for freedom. Two blacks, Prince Whipple and Oliver Cromwell, were with General George Washington when he crossed the Delaware River.

In 1780, during the Revolutionary War, Pennsylvania passed a law to end slavery. The law said that children of slaves would be free when they became 28 years old. Pennsylvania was the first state to have such a law. The law worked. By 1850, there were no more slaves in Pennsylvania, although blacks were still slaves in other states. Most did not become free until after the Civil War.

Early Experiences in Philadelphia
1790-1860

There has been an Afro-American community in Philadelphia since the Revolutionary War.

There was a community of free blacks in Philadelphia at the time of the Revolutionary War. This community grew after Pennsylvania ended slavery in 1780. Slaves who ran away from other states came here to live. Slaves who were able to buy their freedom also came here. By 1860, there were about 500,000 people living in Philadelphia. Of them, 22,000 were blacks.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Blacks lived everywhere in Philadelphia. There was a large Afro-American community in South Philadelphia.

In the early days, blacks lived in every section of Philadelphia. Many lived where they worked, in their employers' homes. There was a large Afro-American neighborhood near Sixth and Lombard Streets in South Philadelphia. Later, as more blacks came to Philadelphia, this neighborhood grew. In 1860 Philadelphia's main black neighborhoods were between Chestnut Street and South Street from Fifth Street to the Schuylkill River.

JOBS

Afro-Americans held many different kinds of jobs, but most were laborers and servants.

Philadelphia's Afro-Americans held many different kinds of jobs. Some were very skilled workers such as blacksmiths, carpenters, and stonemasons. Others were service workers, coach drivers, or caterers. There were a few black funeral directors. Some blacks sewed, cooked, or cut hair in their homes. Most, however, were laborers or servants. Discrimination kept them from getting good jobs. A few were fairly wealthy, but this was very unusual. Most Philadelphia blacks were very, very poor.

Although after 1850 they were not slaves, Philadelphia's blacks were not really free, either. Laws and customs kept them from having the same rights and opportunities as whites.

DISCRIMINATION

Although Philadelphia's Afro-Americans were no longer slaves, they were not really free, either. They did not have the same rights as other Philadelphians. They had fewer opportunities, too. It was almost as hard to be a free black as a slave. Laws limited the rights of blacks. They could not vote. Most jobs were not available to blacks, and it was hard to earn a living. Very few educational opportunities were available to blacks.

Even worse, by law and custom, Afro-Americans were segregated from the Philadelphia whites. Blacks could not ride with whites on public transportation. They could not stay in hotels with whites. They had to attend segregated schools and churches. They were not allowed to live in many sections of the city. In Philadelphia, blacks were not allowed to go into many shops or neighborhoods. They even had to use special "Negroes Only" bathrooms. Blacks were always in danger of being captured and sent to the South as slaves. Such discrimination made the blacks "second class" citizens—citizens with few rights and freedoms.

Free blacks in Philadelphia formed many groups to fight discrimination.

SOCIETIES FOR SELF-HELP

Free blacks did not like the discrimination they faced, but they realized that no one was going to help them. They formed groups to fight discrimination themselves and to provide each other with help. One of the first groups was the Free African Society, formed in 1787. This group was formed because of discrimination in Philadelphia's churches. Often, Afro-Americans could only pray in the back of the church balcony. They could not sit or kneel where they wanted. Two former slaves, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, formed the Free African Society in protest of this discrimination. Membership cost a shilling a month. The money was used to help Afro-

Americans. It was used to care for the sick, bury the dead, and support Afro-American widows and orphans.

The Free African Society did much to help blacks in Philadelphia. It also helped the white community. For example, during a yellow fever epidemic, members of the Free African Society nursed the sick and buried the dead. The disease had spread quickly throughout white Philadelphia. But, that did not stop the blacks. They helped anyway. Many people thought the blacks would be immune to the disease. Of course they also became sick, and over 300 blacks died.

BLACK CHURCHES

Black churches were very important institutions for Philadelphia's Afro-Americans.

Richard Allen and Absalom Jones also founded two black churches. Jones started the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, originally at Fifth and Adelphi Streets. Allen formed the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church at Sixth and Lombard Streets. This church became one of the largest black churches. Churches were one of the most important institutions in the black community. They not only provided spiritual advice, but also set moral standards and offered educational and recreational activities for their members. They were the one place where blacks could be leaders. Through their churches, black leaders could learn how to fight discrimination. Several important black churches got their start in Philadelphia before the Civil War.

EDUCATION

Because of discrimination, few blacks in Philadelphia were able to go to school. They got their education in other ways.

The free black community worked hard to improve itself with education. Although the first black public school was started in 1822, only a few black children were able to go regularly. This was not because they did not want to go, but because many black children had to work. In some neighborhoods there were no schools for black children. In others the enrollment was full.

Many black adults belonged to groups that provided them with some education. Several groups provided them with books. The Philadelphia Library Company of Colored Persons was one such group. Several black newspapers were started during this period, including *The Philadelphia Tribune.* These papers featured information about the black community. Newspapers provided many blacks with an informal education.

Philadelphia Afro-Americans were active in the anti-slavery movement and the Underground Railroad.

STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY—ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT

Free blacks wanted to make their own lives better. They also wanted to help other Afro-Americans become free from slavery. The black community in Philadelphia was very active in this anti-slavery cause. Often it joined with whites in anti-slavery groups such as the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society. Such groups tried to teach others about slavery. Members gave speeches and wrote about why slavery was wrong. They also helped slaves to escape on the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad was not really a railroad. It was an organized system of people who helped runaway slaves escape. These people hid the slaves, fed them, and helped them travel. Runaway slaves traveled from "station" to "station" or person to person. This went on until they reached a state where they could be free. Often the slaves went as far as Canada. The "conductors" on the "railroad" helped keep the runaway slaves from being caught.

Three Philadelphia Afro-Americans, James Forten, Robert Purvis, and William Still, were outstanding leaders in the anti-slavery cause. James Forten was a wealthy businessman who organized the first Black National Convention to work for equal rights in 1830. He was respected by both blacks and whites. Robert Purvis was a light-skinned black man who could have passed for white. He chose not to deny his background. Instead, he devoted his life to bettering conditions for Afro-Americans. He was very active in organizing the Underground Railroad in Philadelphia. William Still worked in the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society. Often he took runaway slaves into his home. He kept careful records about the Underground Railroad. Later, he used these records to write a book. An important part of black history was saved for the future because of his book.

Their anti-slavery and Underground Railroad work was often used against blacks. Many whites did not want to end slavery. Speakers who argued for the end of slavery often met with threats and violence. Many wanted to make anti-slavery activities illegal. Violence over the anti-slavery cause even occurred in Philadelphia. In 1838 the Pennsylvania Hall was burned by a mob. The Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society was housed in this building. The same mob burned a black orphanage.

Early Experiences in Philadelphia 1860-1920

Laws were passed to give rights to Afro-Americans, but the laws were not always followed.

STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY—THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD

In 1861, there was a Civil War in the United States. Many things caused the war, but the main cause was slavery. Many thought there should be no slavery. Others thought slavery should continue. Many blacks fought for their freedom in the Civil War. Many also died fighting.

After the war, there were changes made in the United States Constitution. The most important change was the Thirteenth Amendment. This Amendment, passed in 1865, abolished slavery. It said slavery was illegal. Other changes gave rights to Afro-Americans. Many people hoped that now Afro-Americans would be treated equally. But laws by themselves cannot always guarantee equality. People must follow the laws. Many did not follow these laws. Blacks still had to work hard for equality.

In Philadelphia, Afro-Americans worked for their civil rights through groups like the Equal Rights League. Progress came very slowly. By 1900 many laws were changed and Philadelphia's blacks had won additional rights. The law said blacks were allowed to ride on street cars. It said they could attend any schools they wanted. It said they could go into any restaurant or theater. It said they could sit anywhere they wanted. It said they could use any bathroom they wanted. Despite these victories for equality, though, much prejudice remained. The laws said blacks were equal, but many people did not obey the laws. Many restaurants and theaters still would not let blacks in. Many schools would still not let blacks attend. When blacks tried to vote for the first time in Philadelphia in 1871, whites tried to stop them. Marines were called in to keep order. A year later, violence broke out again at election time. A black leader, Octavius Catto, and two other blacks were killed.

THE GREAT BLACK MIGRATION

Thousands of blacks came to Philadelphia at about the time of World War I. They were looking for better jobs and less discrimination.

After the Civil War, Philadelphia's black community steadily grew. As discrimination in the South got worse, more and more blacks began to leave. About the time of World War I (1914-1918), thousands of blacks were leaving the South every year. This was called the Great Black Migration. About 10,000 blacks a year came to Philadelphia during this period, and by 1920 there were 134,000 blacks in Philadelphia. More than half had come from the South.

Blacks came North for several reasons. Racial discrimination was even harsher in the South than in the North. The South was in an economic crisis. It was difficult for anyone to earn a living, and almost impossible for former slaves. Northern industries, on the other hand, needed the unskilled labor that blacks could provide. Northern newspapers carried stories and advertisements telling blacks that they could have a good life in the northern cities.

Conditions, though, were not as good as most papers said. Southern black migrants had trouble finding jobs and housing. The Philadelphia Afro-American community tried to help. It formed the Armstrong League (now called the Urban League) and the Philadelphia Association of Colored Women to help blacks who came North.

JOBS

During this time there were few good jobs for Afro-Americans. Because of discrimination against them, they were denied many opportunities.

Blacks living in Philadelphia during the period of the Great Migration usually worked in unskilled jobs. Men earned from five to ten dollars a week as laborers, porters, and janitors. A few had skilled jobs as barbers or shoemakers. Some were waiters or cooks. If a black woman worked, she usually was a servant. She did laundry and housework for whites. Some worked at home sewing. The women earned less than the men. At this time, it was nearly impossible for most blacks to move up to better jobs. The opportunities were not there for blacks, even for those with education and training. Better jobs were scarce, in general. When there were jobs, whites got them first. Discrimination kept blacks from getting better jobs. It was also difficult for blacks to save enough money to go into business for themselves.

NEIGHBORHOODS

South Philadelphia's black neighborhoods expanded. Housing conditions in these neighborhoods were poor.

As more blacks moved to Philadelphia, black neighborhoods continued to expand. At this time, most of these neighborhoods were in South Philadelphia. Few blacks lived west of the Schuylkill River. The major black neighborhoods went from the Schuylkill River to the Delaware River, and from Chestnut Street to Fitzwater Street. Since few blacks owned businesses, the black neighborhoods were mostly made up of homes. The stores in black neighborhoods were owned and run by whites.

The houses in these neighborhoods, however, were a lot like those in white immigrant neighborhoods. They were generally overcrowded and substandard. Rents were high and landlords were dishonest. Many blacks were paying one-half of their pay just for housing. Several organizations worked in the Afro-American community to improve these housing conditions.

EDUCATION

Segregation and the need to earn money prevented many black children from going to public schools.

After the Civil War, the Afro-American community stressed the importance of education. Many blacks looked upon education as a way to improve their conditions. In spite of this, less than half of the black children attended school. Public schools in Philadelphia were segregated.

Because of discrimination, blacks could only go to certain schools. Often these schools were far from the childrens' homes in the black neighborhoods. Black children had trouble traveling to these "Negro only" schools. Also, many black children had to help their families earn money. Discrimination caused most blacks to have low-paying jobs. Everyone in the family had to work, even children. They had no time for school. Many Afro-American organizations offered education programs for both adults and children who could not go to public schools. These programs were at night or on Sunday.

DISCRIMINATION

In some ways, the black migrants' experiences were like the white immigrants' experiences. The blacks, however, faced stronger, more violent discrimination than the whites did.

Some people think they can compare black experiences in Philadelphia to other ethnic experiences. It is true that in some ways the migration of blacks to this city was the same as the immigration of other groups. Blacks had come from a rural culture like many other immigrants. Also, both blacks and whites had to adjust to new ways in the city. And blacks did face many of the same problems as did the Poles, Italians, and Jews. They needed jobs, housing, and education.

Although some of the problems were the same, the Afro-Americans had more problems. Their skin color, unjust laws, and the attitudes of many whites made unique problems for blacks. Because of them, discrimination against the blacks was stronger than it had been for white immigrants. They limited blacks' opportunities to improve themselves.

In the period following the Great Migration, discrimination against blacks increased. As the number of blacks grew, so did whites' fear of them. Other Americans and the new white immigrants were afraid that the blacks would change their way of life. They thought that the blacks would take over. They were afraid that they would influence government. They were afraid that blacks would then discriminate against whites. More than before, blacks were segregated. They had to stay in their own neighborhoods and schools. Jobs became even harder for blacks to get. Racial violence broke out more often.

Experiences in Philadelphia
1920-1980

Afro-Americans still migrate to Philadelphia looking for a better life.

The migration of blacks to the cities continued. Afro-Americans came to Philadelphia looking for opportunities they did not find elsewhere. New residents came from cities, towns, and rural areas. Most of them came from the South.

During the sixty years from 1920 to 1980, Afro-Americans in Philadelphia have had both opportunities and problems. Throughout this period, they have tried to win equality and civil rights—rights guaranteed by the law.

STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY—THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND BLACK POWER

The Civil Rights and Black Power Movements helped many Philadelphia blacks improve their lives. Today, a political movement is helping even more.

Life between blacks and whites was still almost totally segregated in Philadelphia during the 1930s. Blacks and whites rarely mingled. The Civil Rights Act was passed by the state of Pennsylvania in 1935. This law increased black hopes for equal treatment. In spite of it, however, little happened right away. Few things about black life got better.

Attitudes toward segregation began to change slowly during the 1940s. World War II created new jobs in the city and blacks had new opportunities to work. The jobs they got were better, too. In the 1950s, more laws were passed and more barriers to black equality were broken. But life for very many of Philadelphia's blacks still did not improve.

The first important change for blacks came in 1954. The U.S. Supreme Court said segregated schools were illegal. It ruled that Afro-American children could go to any school they wanted. Some blacks thought this would end all segregation. They thought it might end discrimination, too. They were wrong. Many ignored the Supreme Court's decision. Even though segregated schools were illegal, they still existed.

A bigger change came in the 1960s with the start of the Civil Rights Movement. The Civil Rights Movement started in the South, with leaders from Southern black churches. It focused national attention on the lack of equality for blacks. National and local black leaders led the struggle. They wanted to show everyone how hard it was to be a black in America and how hard it was for blacks to blend into American society. These leaders believed in nonviolent protests. They peacefully defied illegal segregation and unfair laws. They sat in at "white only" restaurants. They rode in "white only" sections of buses. They used "white only" bathrooms. They marched for equality. They voted and picketed. They tried to influence lawmakers so that they would make fairer laws. They tried to influence others to follow these laws. Hundreds of Philadelphia's blacks participated in the Civil Rights Movement.

Progress was slow. Many blacks grew impatient with the Civil Rights Movement. They believed blacks would never be accepted by whites and they thought blacks should not try to blend into American society. They wanted black equality and black power. Like civil rights leaders, black power leaders defied illegal segregation and unfair laws. But, they often did it violently. They thought peaceful protests had not worked. They said that voting and picketing would not bring changes for blacks. They wanted to fight for changes.

Blacks made progress because of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. They gained many civil rights and a great deal of power. Many blacks, however, still led hard lives. For many, housing was still poor. Jobs were still hard to find. Income was low. Because of these things, a new movement appeared in many black communities. It was a movement to improve housing and employment for blacks. It was a movement to improve schools, too. It was a political movement. Blacks banded together to elect black government leaders. These leaders sought to improve the lives of Afro-Americans. They wrote laws to help blacks have better houses and better jobs. They wrote laws to improve schools.

Afro-Americans Today

Today Afro-Americans are Philadelphia's largest ethnic group. While many live in South and Southwest Philadelphia, few live in the original black neighborhoods. Although there *are many success stories in the city's black community, life is still hard for most black Philadelphians.*

Today the Afro-Americans are Philadelphia's largest ethnic group. There are more Afro-Americans in the city than ever before. Blacks now live in all sections of the city. While many live in South and Southwest Philadelphia, only a few live in the original black neighborhoods.

Afro-Americans in Philadelphia are proud of the progress they have made in their lives. They are proud of the obstacles they have overcome and the problems they have solved. There are many stories of success among blacks in our city.

Blacks have made huge political gains. There are more blacks serving in Philadelphia's government than ever before. Blacks like Augusta Clark, Wilson Goode, and Joseph Coleman are well-known, hard-working, influential government leaders. Their success in politics and government shows that black voters can use the power of their vote to elect men and women who care about black problems. Black voting power makes people listen to blacks. People listen to black political groups such as the Black Political Forum, too. Today, all Philadelphians pay attention when blacks speak out on issues that are important to the black community. And, more gets done than ever before to help that community. Black political success has gone beyond the city government. There are black Philadelphians serving in state and national government as well. For example, Robert Nix is a member of the state Supreme Court, William Grey is a U.S. Congressman, and Juanita Kidd Stout is a Philadelphia judge.

Today more blacks than ever before are going to college. New admissions policies have made it easier for blacks to go to college. Special scholarships have also helped almost any qualified black student to get a college degree if he or she wants. These men and women often go on to become leaders in Philadelphia's community.

Many Afro-Americans have gained economically, also. They have found better jobs and are earning more money than in the past. Affirmative action laws make discriminating against them illegal. Philadelphia's blacks have gained not only from the laws, but also from the spirit of affirmative action.

The city is well-known for the Philadelphia Plan. This plan went beyond the law to provide jobs for blacks. It helped them become skilled carpenters, bricklayers, and plumbers. It helped them find jobs as skilled construction workers. Philadelphia is also famous for the Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC), headed by the Reverend Leon Sullivan. OIC has trained many blacks for better jobs. It has helped them find jobs, too.

Some Philadelphia Afro-Americans have been able to find better housing. Black political and welfare groups have helped end segregated neighborhoods. They have rebuilt run-down neighborhoods and provided good housing for blacks. They have pushed for fair loan policies so more blacks could borrow money to buy houses. They have helped many blacks to repair and rebuild run-down houses.

There are many success stories in the Afro-American community, but life has not improved for everyone. Many still live in poverty. They do not have good educations or good jobs. They still live in run-down, crowded housing. Problems such as poor health, unemployment, and neighborhood crime often make life hard for Philadelphia's blacks. Many still face discrimination. Most Afro-Americans must still struggle for a decent life. Black organizations work hard to help. There are dozens of community groups in every black neighborhood in Philadelphia. Afro-Americans in these groups try to keep their neighborhoods safe and well-maintained. They help keep neighborhood residents employed and educated. They work for the good life in their neighborhoods.

There are also many city-wide organizations working for black Philadelphians. Civil rights groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Urban League try to end discrimination. Social welfare groups like the House of Umoja and the Continental Society help black teenagers stay in school and find jobs. Groups like the Negro Trade Union Council help adult blacks find better jobs. The Advocate Community Development Corporation helps blacks learn home repair skills. The Black United Front and the Black Political Forum make sure blacks are heard in city government. And as always, black churches lead in this struggle for a decent life.

Today Philadelphia's Afro-Americans look at their past accomplishments and present successes with pride. Most, however, know that their struggle for a better life goes on. They are united in their struggle to make things better for all black Philadelphians. They hope for a future when everyone can succeed—when discrimination will not keep anyone from having the chance for a good life.

Afro-American Heritage

Two important themes run through the story of Afro-American heritage. One is pride. The other is the blacks' fight to overcome discrimination.

Afro-American pride comes from an awareness of black accomplishments. These accomplishments began hundreds of years ago with great African kingdoms like Egypt, Ghana, and Mali. They began with many fabulous African cities like Gao, Timbuktu, and Alexandria. They began with the music, arts, and crafts of hundreds of African tribes. They began with people who had well-developed political, economic, and religious systems.

Blacks continued to make great accomplishments even after coming to America as captives. These newer accomplishments are also a source of Afro-American pride. There is pride in the scientific accomplishments of blacks like Benjamin Banneker, George Washington Carver, and Charles Richard Drew. There is pride in the literary achievements of blacks like Phyllis Wheatly, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, and Lorraine Hansberry. There is pride in the achievements of black musicians and composers like Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Scott Joplin, and Marian Anderson. Blacks are proud of Afro-American war heroes like Crispus Attucks and Dorrie Miller, too. They are proud of great athletes like Jack Johnson, Wilma Rudolph, Arthur Ashe, and Mohammad Ali. They are proud of all blacks who have made contributions to America and the world.

Afro-Americans are proud of those who contribute today in their local communities. They are proud of Philadelphia blacks such as Wilson Goode, Philadelphia's Managing Director, the Reverend Leon Sullivan, religious and business leader, and Kenneth Gamble, business and community leader.

Afro-Americans are especially proud of the many men and women who fought for black equality. They are proud of those who fought racism and discrimination. Afro-Americans see people like Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, W. E. B. DuBois, and Sojourner Truth as the real black heroes of the past. These men and women wanted to help all blacks. Some wanted to end slavery. Others wanted to end racial discrimination. All were courageous. They fought against great odds to make life better for Afro-Americans.

The fight to overcome discrimination is the other theme running through Afro-American heritage. This theme also began hundreds of years ago. It began with slavery and it continues today.

The history of slavery in America is as old as the country itself. In 1865, slavery officially ended in America. It became illegal to own slaves. However, many white Americans still believed that blacks were not as good as whites. They felt that blacks should not have the same rights as whites, that they should not be treated equally. This belief of inequality based on race, is called racism. Racism causes discrimination. It causes laws, attitudes, and customs that prevent blacks from being treated equally.

Much of the Afro-American heritage is the story of the struggle to change these laws, attitudes, and customs. It is the story of the early black rebels. It is the story of all those who worked to end slavery. It is the story of organizations fighting for their rights against anyone who denied them equality. The story is about people like Frederick Douglass, Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X. It is about organizations like the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Black Muslims, and the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE). It is about places, too. There is Montgomery, Alabama, where a black boycott helped end segregation laws. There is Oxford, Mississippi, where thousands of blacks registered to vote.

The story is not over. The Afro-American struggle against racism continues. That is why every black achievement is important. Individual victories are victories for all Afro-Americans. They are also victories for all Americans. Black Americans are looking forward to the time when racism will no longer limit the success of anyone in this country.

Thinking Positively: Making Ethnic Posters

We all belong to at least one ethnic group. Most of us are proud of our ethnic group(s). We are proud of our ethnic heritage(s), too. We know about famous people from our ethnic groups. We know about important accomplishments, too. We know what makes us proud. Do others know enough about our ethnic group(s)? Do they know about the famous people and important accomplishments of our ethnic group(s)? Do they know why we are proud of our ethnic heritage(s)?

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Is everyone proud of their ethnic group(s) and their heritage? Why?
- How do we find out about our ethnic group(s)?
- How do we find out about other ethnic groups?

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Find out about your ethnic group.

1. Watch television. Watch programs about your ethnic group. Watch programs that have members of your ethnic group in them. Watch the news, too. How is your ethnic group shown?
2. Read newspapers and magazines. Read stories about your ethnic group and the people in it. Look at pictures, too. What impression do you get about your ethnic group?
3. Ask others what they think of your ethnic group. Ask a member of your ethnic group. Ask a member of a different ethnic group. What is their image of your ethnic group?

THINK ABOUT THIS

- What does "stereotype" mean?
- Do people "stereotype" your ethnic group and its members? Why?
- What happens when ethnic groups are stereotyped?

Make a "positive image" poster.

HERE

1. Make a "positive image" poster for your ethnic group. List all the "positive" things about your ethnic group. List all the things that make you proud of your ethnic group. List famous people. List important accomplishments. List things that your ethnic group contributed to American culture.
2. Plan a poster. Think of ways to show all the positive things about your ethnic group. Make up slogans that tell about these positive things. Think of pictures that illustrate these positive things.
3. Make the poster. Make a big one or a small one. Write your slogans on it. Illustrate it, too.
4. Decide where to put your poster. Choose a place where many people will see it. Then, put it up. (Don't forget to get permission if you need it).

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Could your poster change someone's opinion of your ethnic group? Why?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Do these alone or with others.

Find out about another ethnic group.

1. Choose an ethnic group.
2. Watch television, read newspapers and magazines. How is the ethnic group shown?
3. Ask others what they think of the ethnic group. What is their image?

Make a "positive image" poster for another ethnic group.

1. Choose an ethnic group.
2. List all the positive things about that ethnic group.
3. Make up slogans and think of illustrations about that ethnic group.
4. Make the poster and put it up. (Get permission if you need it.)

Make a "positive image" billboard.

1. A billboard is a big poster. Plan the billboard the same way you planned your poster—but bigger.
2. Include many ethnic groups on your billboard. Make up slogans and illustrations for each.
3. Make the billboard and put it up. (Remember, get permission.)

Remembering Poppy

It is a tradition for some Italian-American families to visit the cemetery after Mass on Sunday. They go to put flowers on the graves and to honor family members who have died. Anthony, an eleven-year-old from South Philadelphia, has come with his family to Holy Cross Cemetery. They are going to put flowers on his grandfather's grave. Anthony is tired of waiting for his mother who is taking a long time. He decides to sit under a tree to wait. As he is sitting there, he starts to think about his grandfather, whom everyone called Poppy.

I liked my grandfather. He was quite a guy. I really liked his stories. He told me all about growing up in South Philly in the old days. He gave me a good picture of South Philly 60 years ago when he was a kid. He gave me a sense of pride, too. He made me proud I'm a South Philly Italian-American.

Poppy was born in South Philly. He was born right near the Italian Market, in a row house on Eighth Street. It was around the corner from Palumbo's. Palumbo's was a boarding house then, not a night club. He lived next door to a bakery. He told me how he used to wake up to the smell of bread, cookies, and cakes. Every morning on his way to school, he would stop at the bakery to get a *biscotti*, which is a licorice-flavored cookie. He never paid because he couldn't afford the penny. That doesn't happen much today. Nobody gives things away for free! But the baker was a nice guy, and he liked my grandfather because he was a *paesano*, another Italian.

Poppy went to a public school, not a Catholic one like I go to. His father couldn't afford to pay for school. Still, his father thought education was important. A lot of Italians from the old country couldn't see the point of going to school in those days. They didn't send their kids. I guess a lot of immigrants thought work was more important than school. Most were so poor at first, they needed the money. Poppy's parents weren't like that. They were poor farmers in Italy and they sold everything they owned to get to America. They came to America so Poppy would have a better life. The sons of poor farmers didn't go to school in Italy. In America, anyone could go to school, so Poppy went. Even though they were poor, his parents knew that going to school helped people get ahead. They made Poppy study, too. I think he was the only kid on his block who graduated from school.

Life was hard for Poppy's family when they first came to the United States. It was hard to earn a living. Poppy's father dug ditches for the city. Poppy's mother sold fruit on Ninth Street. They lived in a rented row house with four other families. Their landlord was a crook. He owned a lot of houses and rented them to Italian immigrants. He cheated them by charging too much. He was Italian, too. I guess that's why Poppy always told me, "Trust your family, your friends, and your neighbors. Help them and they will help you. Don't trust someone just because he's Italian." They used to do that when Poppy was a kid. They'd trust any Italian, even those they didn't know. Some people in South Philly still do that. I think it's dumb. You trust your family and friends. You help them. It doesn't matter if they're Italian or not.

Poppy worked hard all his life. He worked even when he was a kid. He swept stands and cleaned coal bins after school. Later on, he sold soft pretzels and water ice. For a while he was even a waiter in a pizzeria.

When Poppy grew up, he did do better than his parents. Poppy had an education. He learned how to fix cars in school. He became a mechanic and had his own garage. He must have been a good mechanic, too. People came from all over Philly to have Poppy fix their cars.

Poppy made a lot of money. He bought his own house and sent my father to college. He owned a house in Wildwood. We kids used to spend the summer there. He told me that he always wanted his kids to have a better life than he had. My parents feel that way, too. I wonder if that's Italian or South Philly. Maybe it's just parents.

Poppy didn't just work when he was a kid. He played, too. He said he had a lot of fun as a kid. He and his pals played in the street most of the time. There weren't many playgrounds or parks in South Philly when Poppy was a kid. He played some games we play today, like stickball and tag. There were other games, too. Games I never heard of, like kick the can. Poppy's father played bocce and checkers. But in those days there weren't any fancy bocce courts in South Philly like there are now.

Poppy told me other things, too. He told me about church. He went to St. Paul's just like I do. He went with his mother and four sisters. Poppy didn't have any brothers and his father didn't go to church much. Poppy's father liked church in Italy better than church in America. Poppy liked church, although he didn't like sitting so long. I don't like sitting so much either; but at least today, Mass is in English and not Latin. Poppy and his sisters all had their First Communion. They were all Confirmed, too. His ma thought it was important for his soul. His father thought it might help him get into a Catholic high school. Poppy's father wanted him to go to college. His father thought college might help Poppy make money. Poppy didn't go to college, but he did make money.

Eating was another thing Poppy told me about. He said his parents learned to eat in America. I think he meant they learned to eat a lot of different things in America. Poor farmers in Italy didn't have much variety. They had only a little meat and only a few vegetables. They couldn't afford a lot of things. They had to eat what they could grow.

In America, things were different. Food was cheaper. You could eat a whole meal for 25 cents. There were many different kinds of food, too. There were meat, vegetables, chickens, fish and fruits—all kinds of good food. In Italy, eating was important. But in America it was really a big deal. Usually, the Sunday afternoon meal was the biggest meal of the week. Everyone in the family came. Friends and neighbors came, too. The women helped cook different parts of the meal. There would be spaghetti with gravy, minestrone, veal cutlets, meatballs, sausage, chicken, cheese, rum cake, canollis, and lots of wine for the grownups. Poppy said these meals were more important than just eating good food, though. They were a way to have a party and to be with all your family and all your friends at once. At my house, we still have Sunday suppers sometimes. My cousins from Cherry Hill come. We don't eat as much as they did in Poppy's day, but I'll bet we have as much fun. I wonder if other families still do this in South Philly. You can't beat it for good food.

Christmas Eve is another big deal at my house. Poppy told me it was a big deal when he was a kid, too. It was another chance for family and friends to get together. It was also a time for another big meal. It was an Italian tradition to eat a big fish meal on Christmas Eve. In Italy, it was hard to do. Not many families could afford fish. In America, it was easier to get fish. Poppy said he had about twenty kinds of fish on Christmas Eve.

We don't have that many at my house. But we do have a lot. We have a big party, too. Then sometimes we go to Midnight Mass at St. Paul's. It's really beautiful and everybody feels real happy. When Mass is over, we go home and open our Christmas presents. This is a family tradition. Poppy's family did it. He told me that even his father went to Mass on Christmas Eve. That's how important it was.

Poppy opened presents after Midnight Mass when he was a kid, too. And even though they were poor, Poppy's parents always bought the kids something. Italians really love kids. Parents will do without things so their kids can have an easy life. In Poppy's day, this love really showed up at Christmas. I don't know if today's South Philadelphia Italians love their kids so much. My family sure does.

I think the most important thing Poppy ever told me was, "Be proud! Be proud you're Italian and be proud you're from South Philadelphia." Poppy made me feel proud about both these things. He told me about all the famous Italians like Michelangelo, Marconi, and Columbus. He told me about famous Italian-Americans like Enrico Fermi and Fiorello LaGuardia, too. But Poppy was proudest of the famous South Philadelphia Italians. He was proud of Italian-American city leaders like Frank Rizzo, Anna Cibotti, Lisa Richette, and Paul d'Ortona. He was also proud of Philly's Italian entertainers like Mario Lanza.

Poppy made me feel proud about Italians who weren't famous, too. He said, "Most Italians came to America with nothing. They wanted a better life. They wanted to succeed. They wanted their children to have a good life." Poppy told me these Italians overcame a lot of prejudice and discrimination. In the end, they did succeed. They succeeded by working hard and helping themselves. Poppy was proud because South Philadelphia Italians still work hard to succeed. He told me, "You don't have to be rich or famous to be a source of pride. If you work hard, live a good life and help your family and friends, you can be proud of yourself. Others will be proud of you, too. Then you'll be a success."

Poppy was proud of himself. He was the kind man who helped his family and his friends. We all loved him, too. Poppy was a real South Philadelphia Italian-American and I want to be just like him.

Anthony jumped! He thought he saw Poppy standing next to his gravestone. But then he took another look. It was just Uncle Sal. Uncle Sal looked a lot like Poppy. It wasn't a ghost after all! Anthony stood up and walked over to his family.

"Can't we go home? I'm tired. We've been here all day."

Routes: Tracing Your Family's Travels

Most people who came to live in South and Southwest Philadelphia moved there from some other place. Some moved from other parts of Philadelphia. Some moved from other parts of Pennsylvania or from other states. Many moved from other countries. These people moved for many different reasons. Some moved to find work. Some moved to keep from starving. Others moved to escape prejudice and hatred.

People still move, today. Most of us move at least once in our lives. In fact, the government census says most Americans move more than once in their lives. Often their reasons are the same ones people had long ago. Sometimes their reasons are different.

How many times have you moved? How many times have others in your family moved? A Routes Family Travels Questionnaire will help you find out how many times your family has moved. It will also help you find out where they have lived and why they moved.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Look at the world map. Mark "X"s on the places where you think your ancestors came from.
- Now mark an "X" on the places in America where they went.
- Why did your ancestors move to America?

Trace your routes.

HERE

1. Answer the questions on the Family Travels Questionnaire.
2. On the maps, indicate each place you have lived with a

continued

continued

dot. Next to each dot, write the date you moved to that place. Write the name of the place, too. Use as many maps as you need.

3. Connect the dots on the maps. These lines show your routes.

Compare routes.

1. Compare questionnaire answers with others in your group. Compare maps, too.
2. See where others in your group were born. See where they have lived. See how many times they have moved. See why they moved.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Who has moved the most? Who has moved the least?
- What was the main reason members of your group moved?

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Trace your family's routes.

1. Take home enough Family Travels Questionnaires for everyone in your family. Take home a set of maps, too.
2. Ask everyone in your family to answer the questions on the Family Travels Questionnaire. Ask your parents. Ask your brothers and sisters. Ask your grandparents, uncles, and aunts, too.
3. On the maps indicate the places where each family member lived. Indicate each with a dot. Choose a different color for each, if you can. Next to each dot, write the date the person moved to that place. Write the names of the places, too. Write the dates and names in the colors that go with each family member.

continued

continued

4. Connect the dots on the maps. Make the lines the same colors as the dots. These lines show your family's routes.

Compare routes.

1. Compare questionnaire answers. Compare the routes on the maps.
2. See where each family member was born. See where each has lived. See how many times each has moved. See why each moved.
3. Who has moved the most? Who has moved the least? Why?

THINK ABOUT THIS

- What was the main reason people in your family moved? Are they the same reasons others in your group moved?
- Will members of your family move again? Who will move? Why? Where do you think they will go?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Do these alone or with others.

Trace more of your family's routes.

1. Find out about other family members, for example, distant aunts and uncles or great-grandparents. Find out where they lived. Find out where they moved. Find out about as many family members as you can.
2. Find out how they might answer the questions on the Family Travels Questionnaire. Ask other family members to help you find out.
3. Find out the different places they lived and when they lived in each place.
4. Mark their routes on the maps. Choose new colors for these family members.

continued

continued

Make a big family routes map.

1. Put all your family routes on one big world map, one big U.S. map or one big state map.

The Philadelphia Italian-Americans

History at a Glance

Italian-Americans all belong to the same ethnic group because they all have roots in Italy. Italians have always been a part of America's history.

Italians have lived in Philadelphia since before the Revolutionary War, but their greatest influence in the city was after 1880.

Between 1880 and 1920, millions of Italians left Italy. Many left to escape high taxes and to improve their lives.

Italian farmers wanted to come to America very badly. They believed America was the best place to go for a better life.

In America, most Italians lived in ethnic neighborhoods.

Philadelphia's first Italian neighborhoods were in South Philadelphia.

Philadelphia's Italians had many different kinds of jobs. Sometimes, Italian women worked, too.

Sometimes big companies helped Italians find jobs. Sometimes labor bosses helped them. Usually, though, Italians had to help themselves find jobs.

Italians had a tradition of helping each other. In America they continued this tradition.

Mutual aid societies were formed by Italian-Americans to help other Italian-Americans. They provided social, educational, and recreational services.

In the days of early immigration, there were special Italian banks in South Philadelphia.

Italian-American newspapers helped Italian immigrants learn about Philadelphia. They promoted ethnic pride, too.

At first, Italian-Americans were not comfortable in Philadelphia's Catholic churches, so special Italian nationality churches were started.

Italian children went to public schools to learn new skills. Later, many attended Catholic schools.

Today, many Philadelphia Italians still live in the original immigrant neighborhoods. They still carry on the old traditions.

Background

Italian-Americans all belong to the same ethnic group because they all have roots in Italy. Italians have always been a part of America's history.

Italian-American history started with America's early explorers. Italian-Americans have been part of American history since Christopher Columbus landed in America almost 500 years ago in 1492. Italian-Americans were among the first settlers of New Amsterdam (New York), and were part of the struggle for American independence. Throughout the early period of United States history, Italians made many contributions to American life.

Early History

Italians have lived in Philadelphia since before the Revolutionary War, but their greatest influence in the city was after 1880.

According to the census of 1800, approximately 1,600 Italian-Americans lived in Philadelphia. Most of these early immigrants were well-educated and came from the northern parts of Italy. They lived in different parts of the city, but mostly in South Philadelphia around Eighth and Christian Streets. About 1851, a Roman Catholic church, St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, was founded for the growing Italian community in South Philadelphia. A larger group of Italian immigrants began coming to the United States about 1880 and by 1920, half a million Italian-Americans lived in Philadelphia. This newer group of immigrants, their children, and grandchildren had a great influence on the city. It is these Italian-Americans we will look at more closely.

Between 1880 and 1920, millions of Italians left Italy. Many left to escape high taxes and to improve their lives.

REASONS FOR IMMIGRATION

These new Italian immigrants were different from earlier ones in two ways. First, most of them were from southern Italy and Sicily rather than from northern Italy. Second, most were poor farmers and peasants. These southern Italians had good reasons for leaving Italy. They came to America because political and economic conditions in Italy made life very hard.

The country of Italy that we know today was formed from many separate states. When Italy was founded, a new government was established, too. By 1880, there was a lot of unrest. The new government favored industry rather than agriculture. Most industry was in northern Italy and heavy taxes were needed to pay for it. Tax money was also needed for the army and for building highways. The burden of all these taxes fell on the southern Italians. They were taxed at the highest rates, even though they were not represented in the new government. Because they were poor and ignorant, the southern farmers could not vote or take part in running their country.

Southern Italian farmers had other problems, too. The once rich land in southern Italy was ruined. Poor conservation and soil erosion had exhausted it. Italian farmers could no longer grow important crops such as grapes, wheat, or olives. Without crops to sell, it was almost impossible for them to pay the high taxes. Even worse, poor farming conditions made it hard for Italian families to grow enough food for themselves. Most southern Italian farmers had no hope of improving their lives at home. Most could not expect help from their new government. They had to help themselves. Many of them began to look for new places to earn a living.

At first, they looked for jobs in Italian cities or other cities in Europe and Africa. Later, they went to South America. Finally, many made the trip to the United States. Wages and opportunities were better in the United States than in other countries. More and more Italians came to America and to Philadelphia. Meanwhile, in Italy, the word quickly spread.

Life was very good here and Italians could become rich by working hard.

IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA

Italian farmers wanted to come to America very badly. They believed America was the best place to go for a better life.

It was difficult for poor farmers to save enough money for the trip to America, even though at that time it cost very little. However, they were confident they could succeed in America, so they did whatever they had to do to get here. Often families pooled their money to send a father or a son. Those that owned land, sold it to raise the money. Many even sold their personal possessions, jewelry, furniture, or tools to raise money. Once in a while, money for the trip was sent by a relative already living in this country. In special cases, labor bosses, called *padroni*, loaned them money. We will learn more about this later.

At first, mostly Italian men came alone. They were usually between the ages of 16 and 45. Many did not intend to stay. They hoped to earn enough money to return to Italy and buy land there. About one-half did return. After 1900, more men brought their families with them. These families stayed in America.

Once the immigration of Italian families to America started, it kept growing and growing. In the 1920s, the U.S. government passed new immigration laws. These laws limited the number of Italian immigrants allowed to come to America. These laws ended this large-scale Italian immigration.

Early Experiences in Philadelphia 1880-1920

In America, most Italians lived in ethnic neighborhoods.

When they first came, the Italians did what most other immigrants had done. They clustered together in neighborhoods with others from their own ethnic group. They wanted to live near people who spoke their own language and shared their own customs. In an Italian ethnic neighborhood new Italian immigrants could buy their favorite foods and attend a church where the priest spoke Italian. They could use their own language and practice their customs without ridicule. In an ethnic neighborhood they felt at home.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Philadelphia's first Italian neighborhoods were in South Philadelphia.

At first, major ethnic Italian neighborhoods were bounded by Christian Street on the south and Fitzwater Street on the north. The east and west boundaries were the Delaware River and Broad Street. There were Italian neighborhoods in other parts of South Philadelphia near Dickinson and Tasker Streets in an area that once had been a Jewish neighborhood. Some Italians also lived west of Broad Street in neighborhoods that once had been Irish and German.

In the early days many Italian immigrants lived in neighborhood boarding houses. They stayed there until they could move into their own houses. In the years from 1880 to 1920, there were many small boarding houses in South and Southwest Philadelphia. There were also larger ones that were often connected to restaurants. Boarding houses were inexpensive places to sleep and eat. A room and a meal cost less than a dollar. They were also places for Italian immigrants to be near *compatrioti*, other Italian immigrants. One of the best known boarding houses was Palumbo's. Palumbo's, founded in 1873, is now a famous nightclub and restaurant. Even after these early immigrants left the boarding houses, many still liked to live near other Italians. They knew these people and they had the same habits and customs. This preference soon became a tradition among South Philadelphia's Italians. It is a tradition that has been carried on by many of their children and grandchildren. We will say more about this later.

JOBS

Philadelphia's Italians had many different kinds of jobs. Sometimes, Italian women worked, too.

Italians, like all immigrants, had to find jobs quickly in Philadelphia. They had themselves and their families to support. These new Italian-Americans worked at different kinds of jobs. Many worked as construction laborers, especially on the railroads. Italian construction workers helped to build City Hall and the Reading Terminal. They paved many Philadelphia streets and dug many of the city's subway tunnels. Others became peddlers selling fruit and vegetables or household goods. Some were also craftsmen such as masons, stonecutters, and furniture makers. Many of these craftsmen were well-known throughout Philadelphia. Their work was greatly admired and their skills were in great demand. Often, Italian immigrants started small businesses: bakeries, butcher shops, tailor shops, barber shops, or shoe repair shops. In time, some of these small shops grew into big successful businesses. As Philadelphia's Italian-American community grew larger, the people needed Italian doctors, lawyers, and bankers. Many Italian-Americans went into these professions. At first, they served their *compatrioti* in the Italian neighborhoods. Soon, they were working all over Philadelphia.

Often, Italian women worked too. Many worked because they had to work. Their families needed the extra money. Italian women preferred to work at home where they could run their houses, take care of their families, and make money, too. They sewed, wrapped cigars, or made silk flowers. Sometimes Italian women worked as clerks in family stores or as vendors at family fruit, vegetable, or newspaper stands. When necessary, they also worked in factories making clothing, candy, or paper products.

HELP WITH JOBS

Sometimes big companies helped Italians find jobs. Sometimes labor bosses helped them. Usually, though, Italians had to help themselves find jobs.

Italians who came to Philadelphia needed help to find jobs. Sometimes big companies like the railroads helped them. Railroad bosses often hired Italian immigrants to dig tunnels and lay tracks. These bosses knew that the Italians were hard workers and dependable. Sometimes, the bosses even went to Italy to hire them and then paid for the men's trips to America. To many Italian immigrants, railroad work was a great opportunity. It was a job in America.

In the early days, some Italians got jobs through *padroni*. *Padroni* were labor bosses who found jobs for Italian newcomers. Padroni usually were Italian immigrants themselves, but they had been in America for a while. They spoke English and they knew where immigrants could find work. *Padroni* were often the only link that the Italian-speaking immigrants had with American life. *Padroni* often did more than just help immigrants find jobs. They also sometimes collected their wages, helped them find places to live, and helped them with banking and other services. For a time, *padroni* were very influential among Italians. They were looked up to because of their success and they were honored because of their service to others.

In South Philadelphia, however, there weren't very many *padroni*. For the most part, Philadelphia's Italians had to find jobs themselves. At first, most took low-paying, hard jobs and then moved up to better jobs. Philadelphia's Italians did what they could to help each other. Italians hired other Italians. Usually they hired their family first and next their friends. Then they hired Italians from their neighborhood.

Adjustment to American Life

Italians had a tradition of helping each other. In America they continued this tradition.

Italian immigrants who came to Philadelphia had to adjust to a new life. They had to find jobs and to learn about a new culture. Luckily, there was help. Italian-Americans helped each other get used to America.

In Italy, Italians usually helped their family and friends. It was a tradition. In America, they continued this tradition. In fact, in America the tradition became stronger. One reason for this is because in America, Italians were often victims of prejudice. It was not easy for them to get help from other Americans, so they helped each other.

Italians who had jobs helped other Italians get jobs. Italians who knew about America helped other Italians learn American ways. There were mutual aid societies and special banks. There were special Italian-American newspapers. There was the Catholic church, and public and Catholic schools. All these helped Italian immigrants adjust to American life.

MUTUAL AID SOCIETIES

Mutual aid societies were formed by Italian-Americans to help other Italian-Americans. They provided social, educational, and recreational services.

There were many mutual aid societies formed by Philadelphia's Italian-Americans to help other Italian-Americans. Often these societies were based on old village ties. Italians from one area of Italy helped newcomers from that same area. Other times these societies were based on professional or business interests. Italian-American business owners, for example, formed their own mutual aid societies. Mutual aid societies provided life insurance, social and educational services, and recreational events for both children and adults. Italians paid between 25 and 60 cents a month for these benefits. Aside from providing these services, mutual aid societies helped Philadelphia's Italians maintain their sense of ethnic pride, too. Today, the Order of the Sons of Italy in America is the most famous of these organizations. The Philadelphia chapter of this mutual aid society was started in 1905.

BANKS

In the days of early immigration, there were special Italian banks in South Philadelphia.

Neighborhood Italian banks were established to help Italian-Americans in Philadelphia. Newcomers who did not understand or trust American banks understood and trusted these banks because they were run by other Italians. Without these banks, many Italian-Americans would not have saved money or obtained loans for their homes and businesses. Also, Italian-owned banks provided a variety of special business services beyond what banks generally provide today. Through these special banks, Italians in Philadelphia sent money to relatives in Italy. These banks also helped them to buy steamship tickets or houses without leaving their own neighborhood. The first such bank in Philadelphia was the First Italian Exchange Bank on South Eighth Street. Between 1900 and 1918, about 25 neighborhood Italian banks were opened in South and Southwest Philadelphia. Most closed as Italian-Americans adjusted to American banking customs and as Philadelphia's major banks opened branches in Italian neighborhoods.

NEWSPAPERS

Italian-American newspapers helped Italian immigrants learn about Philadelphia. They promoted ethnic pride, too.

Italian-American newspapers were also important. They not only told the Philadelphia Italian-Americans about the news of the day, but also provided other services. These papers, often written in Italian, gave advice and guidance on many different topics such as health care and citizenship laws. They reported local and national events of special interest to Italian-Americans. Their editorials and special feature stories promoted ethnic pride. One of the first Italian-American newspapers in Philadelphia was *L'Opinione*. It was founded in 1906. The Italian-American newspapers began to go out of business as the immigrants and their children learned more about America. As they adjusted to their life in Philadelphia, Italian-Americans began to read English-language papers.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

At first, Italian-Americans were not comfortable in Philadelphia's Catholic churches, so special Italian nationality churches were started.

Almost all Italian immigrants were Roman Catholic. When they came to Philadelphia, they found that American Catholic churches were almost as strange as the rest of American life.

For years the Irish had been the largest Catholic ethnic group in Philadelphia. The Catholic church services in Philadelphia were familiar to the Irish but not to the Italians. Sermons and hymns were in English. Irish priests did not speak Italian. Only a few churches were in Italian neighborhoods and the Italians felt uncomfortable in these churches.

Because Italian immigrants were unhappy in these mostly Irish churches, Philadelphia's Catholic leaders started special Italian nationality churches. These churches were located in Italian neighborhoods and had Italian priests who delivered their sermons in Italian. The hymns were sung in Italian, too. Most of these nationality churches were named after Italian saints or places like Our Lady of Loreto. As more and more Italians went to these nationality churches, some of them became Italian nationality parishes. Many still exist today.

EDUCATION

Italian children went to public schools to learn new skills. Later, many attended Catholic schools.

Both old and young Italian-Americans learned about their new country in American schools. At first, Italians did not go to school regularly. Many had to work or preferred earning money to learning. Because of this, few of the first Italian immigrants' children graduated from high school. They went to school only long enough to learn English and what they needed to know about America. This changed later when public schools introduced vocational programs. These programs showed Italians the value of school because they taught Italian children new skills that would help them get better jobs. As a result, more Italians began to attend school. Eventually, nearly all Italian children went to school. Large numbers of Italian adults also went to school, usually at night. Italians became good students in school and many went on to college.

At first, Italian-Americans chose public schools because these schools were free and public schools in Italian neighborhoods were usually very good schools. As time went on, however, Italians sent their children to Catholic schools. They wanted their children to learn about the Catholic faith, and they felt that the Catholic schools were better for their children.

Italian-Americans Today

Today, many Philadelphia Italians still live in the original immigrant neighborhoods. They still carry on the old traditions.

Today, Italian-Americans live in all parts of Philadelphia. Many, however, choose to live in modern row houses in the old South Philadelphia immigrant neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are called Queen Village, Hawthorne, Bella Vista, and SENE. Many also live in other South Philadelphia neighborhoods like Girard Estates and Packer Park. Although most Italian-Americans work elsewhere in the city, there are some who still work in offices, businesses, and restaurants in these neighborhoods. Many Italian-American businesses are on Passyunk Avenue and Ninth Street. However, on nearly every South Philadelphia street, one can see Italian bakeries, butcher shops, doctors' offices, grocery stores, garages, beauty shops, and funeral parlors.

Many Italians still attend St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, King of Peace, and Our Lady of Loreto in South and Southwest Philadelphia. Although these churches are no longer called Italian nationality churches, most people who go to Mass there are Italian. Many Italians also still belong to mutual aid societies like the Order of the Sons of Italy in America or the Italian Society for Mutual Protection. They often read Italian-language newspapers like *Il Progresso*, which is printed in South Philadelphia. They bank in the neighborhood branches of Philadelphia's major banks. These branches often have Italian-speaking employees to help Italian-speaking customers do their banking.

Today, all Italian-American children go to school. Most graduate and many go on to college and become professionals. As in the past, Italian-American parents generally send their children to Catholic schools.

The Italians who came to Philadelphia brought an old and very rich heritage. They were proud of it. Italian-Americans who grew up and lived in South and Southwest Philadelphia have kept that heritage and made new contributions to it. Today's Italian-Americans are still proud of their traditions and they are determined to keep these traditions and their Italian heritage strong.

Italian-American Heritage

Italian-American heritage is a mixture of people, values, and accomplishments. The cultural heritage of Philadelphia's Italian-Americans is a very rich one. Some of it belongs to the culture of all Italian-Americans. Other parts are unique to the culture of Philadelphia's Italian-Americans.

Many Italian men and women are well-known for their accomplishments. These men and women are a source of pride to Italian-Americans.

Italian accomplishments in science, education, music, and art are well-known. These accomplishments are rooted in Italian history—a history that began long before the birth of Christ. Philadelphia's Italian-Americans point with pride to famous Italians and Italian-Americans like DaVinci, Montessori, Verdi, Fermi, and Marconi. They are especially proud of Philadelphia Italians who became nationally recognized: Mario Lanza, the opera singer, Jim Croce, the pop singer, and Pat Martino, the jazz musician.

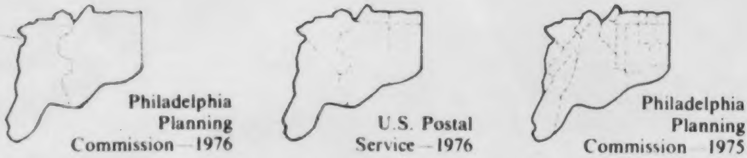
Italian culture has contributed its delicious ethnic food to American life. Probably every American has eaten spaghetti. Before the big immigration of Italians in the 1880s, few Americans even knew what spaghetti was. The same might be said about pizza, ravioli, or dozens of other Italian dishes that are part of most Americans' diets. Italian food and cooking are important parts of life for Philadelphia's Italians. This is clearly seen on special occasions, for example, on birthdays, Christmas and Easter holidays, or religious celebrations like Baptism or First Communion. These special events usually call for fancy meals with many different foods. They are also major social gatherings for family, friends, and neighbors.

Many Italian-Americans have become famous leaders in government and politics. These leaders are carrying on an old Italian tradition. Ancient Rome was located in today's country of Italy. Rome had one of the first representative forms of government. Today's Italians point with pride to famous Italian-American political leaders and are particularly proud of leaders like Frank Rizzo, Paul d'Ortona, Thomas Foglietta, and Lisa Richette—Philadelphia Italians who have gained a national reputation.

Italian-Americans take a great deal of pride in the values and ideas that are important to their heritage. Values like loyalty and responsibility are basic to this heritage. Italians have a tradition of loyalty to those people they love. They feel responsible for their well-being and happiness. This tradition is evident in the way Italians treat members of their family. In addition to being kind and loving, Italian parents often make great sacrifices for their children. Children usually do the same for their parents when they grow up. Family members protect each other, employ each other, and help each other. They stick together in hard times and in good times. Italian families are larger than just parents and children. Italians include grandparents, cousins, uncles, and aunts, even in-laws in their families. They are loyal to all these people. They feel responsible for them as individuals and as a group. They call their family *la famiglia.* In Philadelphia, this sense of loyalty and responsibility often goes beyond *la famiglia.* It often includes ***paesans***, anyone in the Italian-American community.

This tradition of family, ethnic group loyalty and responsibility is both a strength and a weakness for Italian-Americans. As a weakness, it often causes Italian-Americans to be clannish. Even worse, it is often misunderstood by non-Italians. As a strength, the values of mutual loyalty and responsibility among Italians are what helped them get their start in America. These values have also enabled Italians to rely on each other for help. This tradition of loyalty and responsibility is still part of Italian-American life. Because it is part of their heritage, Italians take pride in helping others. They also take pride in helping themselves and their communities. They take pride in being productive American citizens while also being Italian.

The Image of a Neighborhood: It All Depends



Philadelphia Planning Commission—1976

U.S. Postal Service—1976

Philadelphia Planning Commission—1975

SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST PHILADELPHIA

Look at these maps. Each one shows South and Southwest Philadelphia. Yet each map is different. Map #1 shows two neighborhoods. Map #2 shows six neighborhoods and Map #3 shows 17 neighborhoods. Why is this?

Think about your neighborhood. How would you describe it? Where does it start? Where does it become a different neighborhood? How do you know when you are no longer in your own neighborhood? City planners ask these same questions as they try to make sure that cities grow and change in an organized way. City planners want to know all about neighborhoods, but they have a problem. Everyone thinks of neighborhoods differently. Everyone looks at neighborhoods differently. We all have our own image of a neighborhood. Some of us see it as a place where everything is pretty much the same. Buildings look the same. They are about the same height. Most are made from the same kinds of materials. Streets and sidewalks all look about the same. There are few or many trees and shrubs. Houses have front yards or backyards.

Sometimes we describe a neighborhood according to how people use it. For example, are all the buildings offices or stores? Then it is a commercial neighborhood. Are all the buildings homes? Then it is a residential neighborhood.

Often we use status to describe a neighborhood. We label it working class, high class, or slum. We might also use special features to describe a neighborhood. For example, we might mention parks, monuments, or special buildings. Most of us look at boundaries when we describe a neighborhood. We may look at real physical boundaries like rivers or walls that set a neighborhood apart, or we may look at boundaries like streets or parks.

These are all things we include in our image of a neighborhood. We usually describe neighborhoods using all of them. Here is a description of one Philadelphia neighborhood.

This neighborhood is very old. It was once very run-down and poor. Today, however, many of the old houses in the neighborhood have been rebuilt. There are also new houses. The houses are very expensive and the people who live here are probably rich. Most of the houses are not very wide. Neither are the streets. Many streets are paved with stones. The boundaries of this neighborhood are the Delaware River, Eighth Street, South Street, and Market Street. Within these boundaries there are many kinds of buildings. Most are houses, but there are also some stores and offices. There are also many old historic buildings in this neighborhood. Independence Hall is the most famous.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- What neighborhood was described?
- What things were important to this person's image of this neighborhood?
- What things would you include in your image of this neighborhood?

Develop an image of your neighborhood.

HERE

1. Use this Neighborhood Questionnaire to describe your neighborhood.
2. Answer each question. Write the answers on a piece of paper.

History, Heritage, and Hearsay
Neighborhood Questionnaire

- What do you think of first when you think about your neighborhood?

continued

- Does your neighborhood have a name? If yes, what is it?
- List the things that make your neighborhood special and different from other neighborhoods.
- How do you know when you have left your neighborhood and entered another neighborhood?
- Make a rough map of your neighborhood. Label the neighborhood's boundaries. Draw it so that a stranger could use it to recognize your neighborhood.
- What do you like most about your neighborhood?

3. Compare your description to others of the same neighborhood. Compare maps, too. How are they alike? How are they different?

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Will two people ever have exactly the same image of the same neighborhood?

Discover other images of your neighborhood.

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

1. Have someone in your family describe your neighborhood. Use the Neighborhood Questionnaire. Write the person's answers on a piece of paper.
2. Compare your description with his or hers. Compare maps, too. How are they the same? How are they different?
3. Have someone who lives or works in your neighborhood describe the neighborhood, too. Use the Neighborhood Questionnaire. Write his or her answers on a piece of paper.

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4. Compare this description with your description and with the one done by someone in your family. Compare maps, too. How are they the same? How are they different?

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Are the three images of your neighborhood different or similar? Why?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Do these alone or with others.

Make up your own neighborhood questionnaire.

1. Think of questions to ask about neighborhoods. They should be ones that give a clear image of a neighborhood.
2. Answer the questions yourself. Ask a family member, or a neighbor to answer them, too.
3. Do the answers to your questionnaire give a better image of your neighborhood than the answers to the other questionnaire?

Make picture images of neighborhoods.

1. Draw or photograph things in your neighborhood. Include everything *you* think is important.
2. Draw or photograph things in another neighborhood. Include things *you* think are important.

Find out how your neighborhood has changed.

1. Ask someone who has lived in your neighborhood a long time to describe the way the neighborhood used to be. Ask someone who has lived there more than ten years. Use the Neighborhood Questionnaire.
2. Find old photographs or drawings of your neighborhood. Do research. Look in the library or the City Archives.

It's Great to Be Irish!

Mike O'Shaughnessy is visiting his cousin, Eddie Ferguson. It's Mike's first trip to Philadelphia from New York City. The two boys ride the Broad Street Subway on their way to the St. Patrick's Day Parade, and Eddie is talking about their great-grandfather who helped build the Market Street Subway.

"Our great-grandfather, John S. Ferguson, was called Happy Jack by his friends. He worked in the Market Street Subway tunnels in 1902. He was just 18 years old. He worked for the McNichol's Construction Company, one of the biggest construction companies in South Philadelphia. He said Sunny Jim, the boss, hired him. He started out just digging and he sure didn't earn much money—just a buck and a half for a whole day. But he was glad he had work, even though it was really dangerous work. My dad told me how Happy Jack always told stories about cave-ins and how cold and wet it was down there. Jack said that sometimes men even got lost in the tunnel."

"Doesn't sound like much fun. Why did he work at a job like that anyway?" asked Mike.

"Well," Eddie answered, "I guess he knew about digging for a living. He knew it was good steady work. His father, Sean, had helped dig canals in New York when he first came to this country. I think Sean came during the Irish potato famine."

Mike interrupted, "If Happy Jack was our great-grandfather, Sean was our *great-great* grandfather! Our family's been in this country a long time! Wow! I never thought about having relatives that go back so far!"

Eddie continued his story. "They were poor for a long time, too. They had nothing to eat in Ireland but potatoes. Then there was some kind of potato disease and the potatoes wouldn't grow. Everyone in the family starved to death except for Sean. He was lucky. He came to the United States to live with an uncle in New York.

"Later, he and his family came to Philadelphia. They lived with cousins on Fitzwater Street, not far from where I live today. Most of their neighbors were from the same county in Ireland. I think it was Kerry. Sean's family was from Kerry, too, In fact, Happy Jack married an Irish woman Peggy O'Neill, who was from his father's home town. They were married at St. Philip Neri on Queen Street, the same church I go to."

Eddie went on. "Everyone liked our great-grandmother Peggy. She had a great sense of humor. She used to tease everyone all the time. She was real religious, though. She believed that the 'luck of the Irish' was due to the family's faith in God. Peggy and Happy Jack made sure all their kids went to Catholic school, boys and girls, too. My dad said the kids had lots of homework every night and they had to do it. The Sisters were even stricter than they are now.

"The boys had jobs after school. Just like us," said Eddie. "Our great-grandfather, Jack, worked after school. He washed dishes and swept floors in a taproom. Since he was too young to drink, sometimes the owners of the restaurant would pay Jack in leftover cabbage, potatoes, and ham. He didn't care because his family was pretty poor in those days. The whole family worked hard to make their life better. They were determined to succeed and they didn't care when uptown Irish called them 'shanty.' They probably thought that these people were stuck-up. But I think they envied them, too. I think everybody in those days wanted to move up and be 'lace-curtain' Irish. Their determination and the 'luck of the Irish' worked. Things did get better for the family. Sean's son Jack got the job digging the subway. Pretty soon, he moved up to foreman. Another son, Big Ed, became a policeman. He was the block captain, too, helping new immigrants in Philadelphia find jobs and houses. Another son graduated from St. Joseph's College. He became a lawyer. Two of the daughters married and another became a nun in a nursing order. All in all, those first Fergusons did okay."

"Yeah," said Mike, "but my folks don't tell me much about those days. I guess it's because they were so long ago."

"Maybe they don't like to talk about hard times," said Eddie. "Everybody's so successful now, I suppose they don't see the point in talking about the bad years. I think they should be proud of overcoming all that."

"I do too," said Mike. "But the only Irish stories I ever hear are about leprechauns."

"Yeah!" said Eddie. "And giants and Gulliver and those guys. We sing Irish songs, too."

"Not us. My family's too square. I like them but nobody else does. Everybody loves St. Patrick's Day, though. They love the parties and parades."

Eddie stood up and moved toward the subway door, still talking.

"I wish we celebrated the way they did when my dad was a kid. He's always telling us about the old days when his whole school was Irish. The kids got the day off from school. And whole families would start the day by going to Mass. Then they spent the rest of the day going to parties and parades, eating a lot, and just enjoying being Irish. We don't do all that, but we do have a good time."

"My family doesn't do much of anything," said Mike, "but I still have a good time on St. Patrick's Day. I think it's great to be Irish!"

The subway stops at City Hall and the boys jump off.

What's in a Name?
The Ethnic Identity of Names

There are many clues to people's ethnic identities. Names can be clues. Sometimes it is easy to tell ethnic identity from a name. Sometimes it is hard. What is Faud Ali's ethnic identity? What is Mary O'Brien's? What is Carol Allen's?

We can also use names as clues to the ethnic identity of neighborhoods. One way is by looking at people's names. Do the residents' names seem to come from one ethnic group? If they do, it might be an ethnic neighborhood. Vincent Czarnecki, Nancy Cwietniewcz, Joseph Mrozinski, and Stella Pasturzak live in the same neighborhood. Does this neighborhood have an ethnic identity?

There are other ways to use names as clues to a neighborhood's ethnic identity. For example, look at the names of streets or parks. Look at the names of stores or businesses. Pastore Television Repair, Graselli's Drugstore, and the Naples Restaurant are on Columbus Avenue. Marconi Park and Garibaldi Medical Center are nearby. Is this an ethnic neighborhood? What is its ethnic identity?

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Does your name make it easy or hard for others to guess your ethnic identity? Why?

Play the ethnic name baseball game.

HERE

1. Everyone plays.
2. Choose teams. Be sure each team has the same number of players.
3. Choose a referee. The referee keeps the name cards and the referee keeps

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score. The referee makes sure everyone plays by the rules. The referee keeps order, too.

4. Decide which team is up first. Flip a coin. The first team up are batters. The other team are pitchers.
5. Each pitcher takes a turn. Each chooses a name card from the referee. He or she reads it aloud and calls on a batter to guess the ethnic identity. Each pitcher must choose a different batter. That way, everyone has a turn.
6. If the batter guesses the right ethnic identity, the batter gets the points written on the paper. Batters who guess wrong are out. Three outs and the teams switch.
7. Play until there are no more names to guess. The team with the highest score wins.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Why is it easy to guess the ethnic identity of some names? Why is it hard with others?

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Discover the ethnic identity of your neighborhood.

1. Look at the names of things or places in your neighborhood. List the ones that might be ethnic names. Write the ethnic identity next to each.
2. Look at the names of stores or businesses in your neighborhood. Look at the names of churches, too.
3. If you can, look at the names of residents. Ask your neighbors. Write the ethnic identity next to each name.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Do you live in an ethnic neighborhood? How can you tell?
- Are there any neighborhoods where most residents share one ethnic identity? Are there neighborhoods where the names of most businesses, churches, streets, and parks reflect one ethnic group?
- Do neighborhoods change their ethnic identity?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Do these alone or with others.

Discover the ethnic identity of another neighborhood.

1. Choose another neighborhood to explore.
2. Look at the names of people, places, things, and businesses.
3. List the ones that show ethnic identity. Write the ethnic identity next to each.

Trace the ethnic history of your neighborhood.

1. Find out the names of people, places, things, and businesses in your neighborhood 10 years ago. Ask older residents. Go to the library and do research. Look in the city archives.
2. List the ones that show ethnic identity. Write the ethnic identity next to each.
3. Compare this list to the list for your neighborhood today. What has changed? What has stayed the same?

The Philadelphia Irish-Americans

History at a Glance

The Irish-Americans all belong to the same ethnic group because they all have roots in Ireland. The first Irish came to the United States to escape unfair laws.

Some of the early immigrants were wealthy. Others were poor and came as indentured servants.

Most Irish immigrants came to the United States after 1845. In just a few years, a million people left Ireland because of a potato famine. Others left to escape British rule.

Thousands of Irish immigrants came to Philadelphia during the famine years. Most were very poor.

Irish immigrants first lived in ethnic neighborhoods in South Philadelphia.

Irish workers helped Philadelphia grow into a large industrial city. Irish immigrants usually had hard and low-paying jobs.

The Irish immigrants formed community organizations. These organizations helped the Irish solve problems. They also provided educational, social, and recreational activities.

The Catholic church was very important in the Irish-American community.

Most children of Irish immigrants went to Catholic schools.

Immigrants read special Catholic and Irish ethnic newspapers for information and news.

The Catholic church sponsored welfare organizations, charities, and savings and loan associations.

The Irish-Americans joined organizations that promoted ethnic pride. They also joined organizations that sought to free Ireland from British rule.

Volunteer fire companies served more than one purpose in Irish-American neighborhoods. They not only fought fires, but also served as centers for neighborhood social life.

Irish-Americans were talented political organizers and leaders.

In the early days, many Americans discriminated against the Irish because they were Catholics and foreigners. Discrimination lessened as time passed.

Today, Irish-Americans are successful in many areas of American society. They are proud to be Irish and American at the same time.

Background

The Irish-Americans all belong to the same ethnic group because they all have roots in Ireland. The first Irish came to the United States to escape unfair laws.

The Irish were one of the first groups to immigrate in large numbers to the United States. Many came here because their government was unfair to them. English kings and queens had ruled Ireland for hundreds of years. They ruled harshly and often made laws unfair to Catholics. Most Irish were Catholic but it was illegal for them to go to Catholic Mass. It was also illegal for Catholics to own land. It was even illegal for Irish Catholics to hold political office. Since there was no one to speak for Irish Catholics in the government, there was no one to change these unfair laws.

Early History

Some of the early immigrants were wealthy. Others were poor and came as indentured servants.

Before 1800, many Irish Catholics eagerly came to America to escape unfair treatment by their government. Some who came were wealthy. Others were poor. The Irish who were poor often came as indentured servants, and agreed to work without pay for seven years in return for their trip.

Some of these Irish indentured servants came to Philadelphia. They worked for rich farmers and store owners. Eventually, they worked off their debt. When they became free, some stayed in the city and became respected citizens.

Many Irish fought in the Revolutionary War. Some were heroes like John Barry, the founder of America's Navy.

In 1800, there were about 5,000 Irish-born citizens in Philadelphia. Although there were Irish Catholic churches like St. Joseph's at Fourth Street and Willings Alley, there were no special Irish neighborhoods. Ethnic neighborhoods grew later as more and more immigrants left Ireland and settled in Philadelphia.

Most Irish immigrants came to the United States after 1845. In just a few years, a million people left Ireland because of a potato famine. Others left to escape British rule.

REASONS FOR IMMIGRATION

In Ireland, few Irish owned their own land. Most rented it from British landlords. Irish farmers had to work very hard to grow enough to pay their rent. They usually had little left for themselves.

In only six years, between 1845 and 1851, a disease killed most of the potato plants in Ireland. Potatoes were the farmers' main crop. There was a famine and the Irish had little food to eat. They also had no way to pay their rent. Many English landlords threw the Irish farmers and their families off the land. A million people starved to death. Another million people left Ireland. They left to keep from dying. Many other Irish left their homeland because they were unhappy with British rule. They thought Ireland should be ruled by the Irish. They loved their country, but they left rather than live under British rule.

Early Experiences in Philadelphia
1845-1920

Thousands of Irish immigrants came to Philadelphia during the famine years. Most were very poor.

During the years of the potato famine, thousands of Irish immigrants came to Philadelphia. Many more came later. By 1880, about 102,000 people of Irish birth lived in Philadelphia. Most of these immigrants were very poor. They came to America without any money and few possessions.

Irish immigrants first lived in ethnic neighborhoods in South Philadelphia.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Like other immigrants, at first Philadelphia's Irish immigrants lived in the poorer areas of the city. Many lived in South Philadelphia neighborhoods between South and Tasker Streets. These neighborhoods went from the Delaware River to the

Schuylkill River. Many Irish immigrants also lived near Rittenhouse Square.

At first, these immigrants lived in ethnic Irish neighborhoods. Often neighbors all came from the same towns or counties in Ireland. They felt at home living where homes and businesses were owned or rented by other Irish. Although most Irish immigrants clustered together this way at first, many moved to new neighborhoods as time passed.

Before long, Irish were living in almost every Philadelphia neighborhood. Most were successful and many owned property. Some even moved to expensive, fashionable neighborhoods. Many Irish stayed in the old neighborhoods, however. Those who remained often made fun of those who left by calling them "lace curtain Irish." The ones who left tried to return the insult. They called those who stayed in old neighborhoods "shanty Irish."

By 1920, Irish immigration had dropped off. Immigration laws made it harder to come to the United States. Economic problems made it difficult for unskilled Irish immigrants to find jobs in America. Also, the political and religious situation in Ireland improved, so fewer Irish wanted to leave.

JOBS

Irish workers helped Philadelphia grow into a large industrial city. Irish immigrants usually had hard and low-paying jobs.

Many Irish immigrants came to Philadelphia between 1840 and 1880. Philadelphia's economy was changing in these years. It was getting better. New businesses and industries were established. New factories were built. Many workers were needed for these new factories, businesses, and industries. There were jobs in the building, clothing, manufacturing, and metal products industries. The Irish immigrants took advantage of this need. They provided much of the labor that helped Philadelphia grow into a large industrial city.

The Irish who immigrated to the United States between 1845 and 1920 usually came with their families. To make ends meet, it was often necessary for everyone in the family to work. Men, women, and even children got jobs.

During this time, most Irish immigrants found jobs by themselves or with the help of their families and friends. Sometimes they used a labor broker. Labor brokers ran "intelligence offices." They had lists of jobs and found immigrants to fill these jobs. Through the intelligence office labor brokers, immigrants could find jobs digging canals, laying railroad tracks, or working as servants.

In the early days, some Americans discriminated against the Irish. Because of this, Philadelphia's Irish-Americans usually worked as unskilled laborers. They worked for low wages. Unemployment was a frequent problem because steady work was hard to find. The new Irish immigrants often got the most undesirable jobs. Some employers took advantage of Irish workers by giving them the hardest and most dangerous jobs. Sometimes they tried to cheat them, too. These early Irish-Americans eventually overcame this job discrimination. They made important contributions to the city through the work they did.

Irish workers helped build many of the railroads and public buildings in Philadelphia. Sometimes they worked far from the city, living in camps near their jobs. The Philadelphia Irish-Americans who built the Raritan Canal in New Jersey and the Lehigh Navigation Canal near Easton, Pennsylvania, lived in such camps. They dug and moved dirt on these projects. Modern machinery didn't exist then, so most of it had to be done with picks and shovels. Irish-Americans from Philadelphia also worked for the railroads. They leveled land and laid tracks for the Pennsylvania Central, the Reading, and the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore railroads. They also helped build Philadelphia's subways and City Hall.

Irish men also found jobs in industry. In metal-forging plants they shoveled or carried coal to keep the furnaces going, or they shoveled raw ore into the furnaces. They also carried and stacked the finished metal bars. Some Philadelphia Irish-Americans worked in textile mills making cloth or in clothing factories sewing clothes. Other Irish immigrants worked on the Delaware River docks unloading wood and coal from ships.

Most Philadelphia Irish men worked as blue-collar laborers, digging or loading. Their work was hard and often dangerous. It was low-paying work, too. But even in the early days, there were a few Irish-American doctors, teachers, and lawyers. There were also Irish-American priests, businessmen, and shop owners in Philadelphia.

As time passed, many Irish, blue-collar workers got better jobs that were less dangerous and paid better. They became construction supervisors, factory foremen, and dock managers. Newer immigrants from Poland, Italy, and Russia took the dangerous, low-paying jobs. Soon there were Irish-American railroad engineers, blacksmiths, and freight handlers. There were Irish-American builders, police, and firefighters. There were Irish-American factory bosses. By 1880, there were many Irish-American doctors, lawyers, and teachers. By 1920, Irish-Americans held all kinds of jobs.

Often Irish women worked to add to the family income. A few worked at home. They did washing and ironing. Some rented out extra rooms in their homes. Others worked outside the home. Some of these women worked as maids, cooks, or babysitters. In the 1800s, such jobs were easy to find in Philadelphia. Some Irish-American women worked in the textile and clothing factories. Unlike Irish men, Irish women usually did not move up to better jobs. As late as 1920, three-fourths of all working Irish women were still servants. A few Irish-American women became nuns, and joined nursing and teaching orders.

Adjustment to American Life

The Irish immigrants formed community organizations. These organizations helped the Irish solve problems. They also provided educational, social, and recreational activities.

Irish immigrants were luckier than other immigrants because they spoke English. They did not have to learn a new language in America. This made it a little easier for them to adjust to other things, too. But, Irish immigrants still had many problems. Like many other ethnic groups, the Irish immigrants formed special community organizations. These organizations helped Irish-Americans adjust to their new country. They helped the newcomers to feel at home in their new neighborhoods. They also provided many educational, social, and recreational activities.

Some groups worked to free Ireland from British rule. Thousands of Irish sent money back to Ireland for their poor families.

The Catholic Church was very important in the Irish-American community.

CATHOLIC CHURCH

In the early days, the most important organization for many in Philadelphia's Irish-American community was the Catholic church. In Ireland, Irish-Catholics had been persecuted. They were not allowed to own land or to vote. They were not allowed to go to Mass. Because of this, the right to practice their religion was especially important to them. In America they quickly took advantage of their right to religious freedom. Many of the Catholic churches in Philadelphia had large numbers of Irish members. Most had Irish priests. Soon the neighborhood Catholic church became the center of many Irish immigrants' lives. It not only provided for their religious needs, but also helped them meet their practical, day-to-day needs. For many Irish-Americans, the parish church was both a religious and a community service organization. In Philadelphia, parish churches sponsored schools, hospitals, and charities. They were also meeting places for social groups.

Most children of Irish immigrants went to Catholic schools.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Many Irish immigrant children in the 1840s and 1850s went to Catholic schools. Their parents did not trust public schools. Since Irish schools had discriminated against Catholics, the immigrants thought that American public schools would discriminate against them too. Also, they wanted their children to learn their religion in school. They wanted to make sure that their children would be good Catholics.

By 1870, there were 26 Catholic parish schools in Philadelphia. There were also 21 Catholic academies and boarding schools. Irish girls attended these schools as often as Irish boys. These Catholic schools had a tradition of strict discipline. They also had a tradition of good scholarship. The children studied English grammar, spelling, history, and religion. Finding money to support the schools was difficult, but Irish-Americans believed that a Catholic education was important so they made sacrifices. They did without things and saved so their children could go to Catholic schools.

Many Catholic school buildings were paid for with the pennies of these immigrants.

Immigrants read special Catholic and Irish ethnic newspapers for information and news.

NEWSPAPERS

Special Catholic and Irish ethnic newspapers were published for Philadelphia's Irish-American communities. *The Catholic Herald*, later called *The Catholic Standard and Times*, was one such newspaper. It often combined church news with information helpful to immigrants and stories about Ireland . It was very popular and many Irish-American households subscribed to it. This newspaper still exists and is still widely read. Over the years there have been 20 special Irish newspapers in the city.

The Catholic church sponsored welfare organizations, charities, and savings and loan associations.

CHURCH-SPONSORED ORGANIZATIONS

The Catholic church also sponsored many community welfare organizations and charities. These organizations and charities were very important to many Irish immigrants. They helped immigrants in times of trouble. They provided health care, food, and shelter to the needy. They were often the only places Irish-Americans could get help. St. Joseph's Hospital, St. Joseph's Orphanage, St. Anne's Widows Home, and the St. Vincent de Paul Society are only a few of the social service agencies started by the Catholic church to help the Irish immigrants.

The Catholic church also sponsored savings and loan associations. These were special banks where the Irish immigrants could save their money. They could borrow money, too. Like many other immigrants, the early Irish immigrants did not understand or trust American banks. They did not like to use them. They trusted the Catholic church, and they used the church-sponsored savings and loan associations. These associations made it possible for even working persons to buy decent houses. Associations with Irish names like the Flanagan Building Association or St. Patrick's Building and Loan Association once were common in Philadelphia. Eventually, Irish-Americans began to use American banks, and these special banks closed.

The Irish-Americans joined organizations that promoted ethnic pride. They also joined organizations that sought to free Ireland from British rule.

IRISH-AMERICAN ETHNIC SOCIETIES

Most of the organizations sponsored by the Catholic church were intended to help Irish immigrants get along in America. There were other societies for Irish-Americans, too. These were not sponsored by the church and had different purposes. The Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick was founded in 1771 to promote ethnic pride and to assist Irish immigrants in their new country. It conducted social and educational programs for Irish-Americans. Other societies, such as the Fenian Brotherhood founded in 1858, raised money to help Ireland overthrow English rule. Many of these political societies raised money to send guns to Irish nationalists. However, because some of these political societies supported violence, many immigrants did not join them. Others joined them enthusiastically.

Many of the old Irish social and cultural societies, like the Friendly Sons, still exist. Most of the political societies, like the Fenian Brotherhood, died out when southern Ireland became an independent country. New political societies appeared again during the 1960s. These groups are supporting the independence of Northern Ireland.

Volunteer fire companies served more than one purpose in Irish-American neighborhoods. They not only fought fires, but also served as centers for neighborhood social life.

FIRE COMPANIES

In the early days, volunteer fire companies were important organizations for Philadelphia's Irish-Americans. These fire companies were organized by the neighborhood and each company fought fires in its own neighborhood. For Philadelphia's Irish, fire houses served more than one purpose. Many were used as community centers and neighborhood gathering places. One could hear the neighborhood news and discuss community affairs in the fire house. Volunteer fire companies also sponsored social and recreational events such as parades, concerts, and lectures. Fire chiefs were called company directors and they were important citizens. To be elected a fire company director was a great honor.

Irish-Americans were talented political organizers and leaders.

POLITICS

Irish-Americans also played an important part in Philadelphia politics. Many Irish-Americans were talented political organizers and leaders who worked in Irish immigrant neighborhoods. They made sure Irish-Americans voted. These neighborhood organizers were called block captains. Block captains helped Irish immigrants understand how to make politics work for them. They helped Irish-Americans get a greater voice in government. They often gave immigrants the things they needed in return for the immigrants' votes. A block captain might offer to help an immigrant get a job, provide coal, or speak with the local government. In return the immigrant voted for the block captain's candidates. Block captains were influential. They had influence at City Hall and in the Irish neighborhoods. Irish block captains also became organizers in other ethnic neighborhoods. Some Irish-Americans were well-known and ran for public office. Many served on City Council or were judges.

Early Discrimination—The Know-Nothings

In the early days, many Americans discriminated against the Irish because they were Catholics and foreigners. Discrimination lessened as time passed.

During the peak years of their immigration to America, there was widespread discrimination against the Irish. Many Americans were prejudiced against Catholics and foreigners. The Irish were both. Many Philadelphians were afraid the Irish newcomers would take their jobs. They feared Irish influence in government. To protect themselves, they started a political party. It was named the Native-American Party, although some people called it the Know-Nothing Party. The Know-Nothing Party was active in the Philadelphia area as early as 1837. Its members wanted to protect American laws and customs from foreign influence. They even tried to keep immigrants from becoming citizens and voting. The Know-Nothings held many anti-Catholic, anti-foreigner protest rallies.

In 1844, these protests led to a major conflict in Philadelphia. An Irish Catholic church leader, Bishop Francis Kenrick, wanted Catholic children to be allowed to use the Catholic Bible in school. At that time, children in public schools used only Protestant Bibles for lessons. The Know-Nothings did not like Catholics using their own Bibles. They were afraid the Catholics would become too influential in the public schools. The Know-Nothings decided to hold a protest meeting in an Irish neighborhood. A Know-Nothing was shot and a bloody riot broke out. The Know-Nothing crowd burned two Catholic churches. Many people were hurt. A few months later there was another riot in Southwark, a South Philadelphia neighborhood.

It was years before the bad feelings on both sides vanished completely. Many Irish remained suspicious of other Americans. Also, they stayed angry because Irish-Americans had been discriminated against.

As time passed, however, most people stopped thinking of the Irish-Americans as foreigners. Irish-Americans got good jobs and improved their living conditions. Discrimination against them lessened. Their own attitudes changed. They grew less suspicious and less angry. They began dealing with other Americans on equal terms. Before long, Irish-Americans became part of American society.

Irish-Americans Today

Today, Irish-Americans are successful in many areas of American society. They are proud to be Irish and American at the same time.

Today, Irish-Americans have blended into American society. They have fulfilled the goal of the first Irish immigrants—to become Americanized.

In Philadelphia, Irish-Americans live in neighborhoods all over they city. They work in all professions. They are influential in politics, business, industry, and the Catholic church. They are respected, contributing members of Philadelphia's society.

Irish-Americans are proud of their success and achievements in the United States. Others think that many Irish have sacrificed their ethnic identity so that they could become successful in America. This may be true for some, but in Philadelphia, most Irish-Americans still carry on the traditions of their heritage.

Irish-Americans today still follow their tradition of service to the city. Many Philadelphia police and firefighters are Irish-Americans. There are also Irish-American city council members and judges. Even Philadelphia's mayor, William Green, is an Irishman!

Philadelphia's Irish-Americans are also still very loyal to the Catholic church. They attend Mass regularly and send their children to Catholic schools. They contribute enthusiastically to their parish church, to Catholic charities, and to Catholic social programs. They volunteer their time and money to support Catholic hospitals, schools, and colleges. To many, the neighborhood Catholic church is still the center of religious and social life.

Many Irish in Philadelphia also still belong to ethnic societies. These societies are growing, as many Philadelphia Irish look for ways to strengthen their ethnic heritage. In fact, today there seems to be a renewal of Irish ethnic heritage in Philadelphia. All over the city, especially in the old Irish neighborhoods—Schuylkill, Grays Ferry, Tasker, and Two Street—there is a new sense of ethnic pride. Irish-Americans are proud that their parents and grandparents helped build Philadelphia's buildings, industries, and businesses. They are proud that Irish-Americans continue to contribute to the city's well-being. They are proud to be Irish and American at the same time.

Irish-American Heritage

Many wonder if there is an Irish-American heritage in Philadelphia. Although it is not always easy to see, it does exist. It is an old heritage that has contributed greatly to the heritage of our country and city.

All Americans owe much to the heritage of Irish folk tales. Many of our favorite tall tales about fairies, giants, and magic come from Irish folk tales. Thanks to this tradition, most of us know about leprechauns and shamrocks. We know about blarney and the gold at the rainbow's end, too. We know what causes good luck and bad luck. Most of us know about *Gulliver's Travels*, a story written by an Irishman. Many of us also know the strange, scary stories and poems of Edgar Allan Poe, a Philadelphia Irish-American.

All of us have laughed at Irish humor. Some of the jokes we tell were first told by Irish immigrants. In fact, one of America's first joke books was a collection of Irish jokes. These jokes poked fun at hard times and phony people.

We all owe much to the Irish heritage of leadership and service to the community. This heritage has given Catholics many outstanding church leaders. It has given workers union leaders like Maria McCreery and Frank Fitzsimmons. It has given us all important political leaders, including a number of Irish-American Presidents: Andrew Jackson, John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. It has also given Philadelphia two Irish-American mayors, James H. J. Tate and William Green. It has given our city council members like Francis Rafferty and John B. Kelly. It has given business leaders like Matthew McCloskey and John McShain. Their construction companies built the Navy Yard, Veterans Hospital, the Philadelphia Airport, Convention Hall, and many other Philadelphia landmarks.

The Irish attitude toward hardship is another important part of their heritage. For centuries in Ireland, and in America, most Irish had hard lives. They had little food and were widely discriminated against. Work was hard and pay was low. But many Irish turned hardship into a challenge—something to overcome. They believed that hard work, faith in God, and luck would help them succeed. Courage in the face of hardship is an important Irish tradition, and an important part of Irish-American heritage. It has also become part of America's heritage, too.

An Irish legend shows the importance of this traditional attitude. In this legend, a boy was kidnapped by pirates. They made him a slave, but he soon earned his freedom through hard work, luck, and faith in God. He became a priest. Other priests treated him badly because he had been a slave. Again, he worked hard and had faith in God. He had good luck, too. He was sent to Ireland. His job was to convince all of the Irish to become Catholic. It was a hard job but he succeeded. Through hard work, luck, and faith in God, he started the Irish-Catholic Church. He became Bishop of Ireland. He was made a Saint. This man was St. Patrick.

To many Irish-Americans, St. Patrick is a symbol of determination and success. He is a symbol of their own history and that is why St. Patrick's Day is so important. On this day, the Irish celebrate their ethnic heritage. They celebrate with costumes, parades, parties, and special foods. St. Patrick's Day is a special day for fun. It is a special day to say, "It's great to be Irish!"

Tell It Like It Was: Oral Histories—Part I

There are many kinds of history. One kind is oral history. An oral history is an informal history. It is not about famous or important people. It is about ordinary people. It does not come from books. Oral history comes from personal memories. An oral history is the story of a person's life as that person remembers it. It tells the story of someone's everyday experiences. It tells what was important to that person. It also tells what he or she thought about events in the past.

You can write an oral history. This activity will help you. It has two parts. Part I will help you prepare the oral history. Part II will help you write the oral history.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- In your opinion, which tells you more about life in the past, history books or oral histories?

Plan an oral history interview.

HERE

1. Prepare a set of questions to ask. Look at the sample questions for ideas. Use some of them or make up some others. Write your questions on a piece of paper.

Sample Questions for Oral History Interview

1. What is your full name?
2. When were you born?
3. Where did you grow up? City? Neighborhood?
4. Where did you go to school?
5. Describe an average day in school?

continued

continued

6. What kind of work did your parents do?
7. Describe the jobs you have had.
8. When growing up, how did you and your friends have fun?
9. What ethnic group(s) do you belong to?
10. How important was your ethnic identity when you were growing up?
11. Describe the neighborhood(s) where you grew up.
12. What important events from history do you remember?
13. How did these events influence your life?
14. How are things today different than they were when you were growing up?

2. Try out your questions. Ask them of someone in your group. Interview them and write their answers. (Or record them on a tape recorder.)
3. Rewrite questions that do not work well. Or replace them with other questions.
4. Make a list of persons to interview. Include family members and neighbors. The people on your list should be older people.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Why is it better to interview older people for your oral history?

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Conduct an oral history interview.

1. Choose someone from your list to interview. The older the person, the more history you will find out.
2. Explain what you want to do. Explain oral history and explain this activity. Ask

continued

continued

their permission. Plan a time for the interview with them. Pick a place to have the interview, too.

3. Ask your questions and record the answers. (Write them or tape them.) Give the person a chance to go beyond your questions. Let them ramble a little, but keep them on the topic. Make sure the questions are answered. Remember, always be polite.

4. Keep the questions and answers. You will need them later to write your oral history.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- What new things did you learn from your interview?
- Did it help you understand how people lived long ago? Why?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

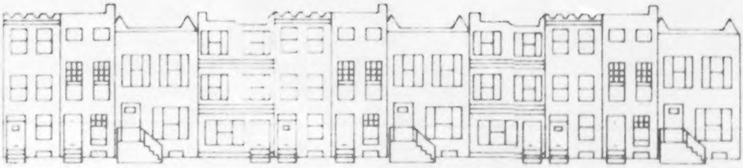
Do these alone or with others.

Interview others.

1. Interview others on your list. Use the same questions or make up different ones. More interviews will give you a better picture of long ago.

Read other personal histories.

1. Go to the library. Ask for these books:
    - — *The Foxfire Books* edited by Eliot Wigginton
    - — *Hard Times* by Studs Terkel
    - — *Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Malcolm X and Alex Haley
    - — *The Promised Land* by Mary Antin
    - — *Diary of Anne Frank* by Anne Frank



Letters from the Past

Lisa, a Jewish teenager, was sitting in her room reading an old notebook. Copied into the notebook were some old letters. They were letters that her great-grandmother, Rebecca, had written when she first came to the United States from Russia. Rebecca was eighteen at the time. Lisa was glad that someone had copied the letters into English. She would never have understood them in the original Yiddish.

15 January 1901

Dear Family:

I have been in Philadelphia for one month. I live with Aunt Sophie and Uncle Isaac in two rooms over a store. Uncle Isaac has found a job because he sews so well. He works in a factory sewing men's trousers. Aunt Sophie sells fruits from a pushcart. I have not been able to find a job yet, but I hope to soon.

The trip on the ship was terrible! So many people were crowded together in such a small place. All the men stayed together in one room below the deck. All the women and children stayed in another room. We couldn't see out. A big storm came and everyone was sick. I was very glad to put my feet on solid ground even though I was so far from home.

Our neighborhood is the most fascinating place. All the families on our street are Jewish. Everyone speaks Yiddish. There are three stores, a cafe, and two synagogues all on the same block. You can buy everything you need from pushcarts on the street. Fruit, vegetables, pots and pans, even shoes!

Around the corner, though, the neighborhood changes. Most of the people there are Italian. They speak Italian and they seem strange to me. Uncle Isaac warned me to stay on my own street. He's afraid I'll get hurt. But sometimes I sneak over and buy fruit in the Italian neighborhood.

I am no longer homesick for the old country. I wish you could all come here. I will save money so I can buy a ticket for you to come here. Everyone should come here.

It is safe in the United States. We do not have to worry that soldiers will break into our home, or burn down the house. I remember how I always worried about these things. Father would be able to pray at the synagogue every day here, too. We can worship without any fear.

Please don't think I have forgotten you because I don't write very often. I am too tired at night to write very many letters.

Your daughter and sister,

Rebecca

7 February 1902

Dear Family:

I have been in the United States now one year. I have the most amazing things to tell you! I have been working in the needle trades. I sew collars on women's dresses. I work six days a week (not on Saturday, the Sabbath), from six in the morning until eight at night. I do get tired. But I am so happy to work, I do not mind.

Life is not all work. Two nights a week I go to school. I am learning to speak better English. I am also learning about the history of this great country. One day I will become a citizen and a real American.

Friday night I help Aunt Sophie get ready for Sabbath. Uncle Isaac goes to the synagogue around the corner. It used to be a store. He knows a nice young man there. Maybe I'll get to meet this nice young man.

Your daughter and sister,

Rebecca

10 May 1902

Dear Family:

Remember when I told you about the young man from the synagogue? His name is Hershel. I've been seeing him. I like him and his family. He's talked to Uncle Isaac and we've gotten permission to get married in October. He has saved enough money to open a grocery store.

At first, we plan to live in an apartment over the store. I will not have to sew at the factory any more, so I will help in the store, instead. When we save enough money, we plan to buy a house. When we have a family, we will make sure all our children go to school. I hope that our children will do well in school so they don't have to work as hard as their parents and grandparents.

Life is good here. Many people start as poor immigrants, but after they work hard they get good jobs and they aren't poor any more. I know I will be happy as a wife and mother in this country. How I wish you could be at my wedding!

Your daughter and sister,

Rebecca

Lisa was now lying on her bed. She was wondering what it would be like if she were to leave her home and country. Would she be homesick? Would she miss her family? Would it be hard to learn a new language?

She heard her mother call, "Lisa, Lisa! You got a letter in the mail!" Lisa jumped up and ran to get her letter. One look and she knew it was from her pen pal and second cousin, Natasha. Natasha lived in Russia.

Excitedly, she tore it open:

17 March 1981

Dear Cousin Lisa:

I am so happy, I can hardly write this letter. I was very excited when I became your pen pal one year ago. Today, I am so excited I cannot catch my breath. Our whole family has been laughing and crying at the good news. We are finally out of Russia. We arrived in Zurich yesterday. We will come to Philadelphia in one month. I will soon see the places in Philadelphia that you wrote about. I will even see your synagogue. Mama and Pappa are most excited about being able to do their work. They are anxious to begin teaching again. I am anxious to study ballet, again. Yuri is anxious to see a baseball game.

If I am a little timid when I come, it will not be because I don't wish to see you and your country. It will be because everything will be so new. I was a little sad to leave my home, but I am looking forward to a new life in America.

See you soon.

Your cousin and pen pal,
Natasha

Tell It Like It Was: Oral Histories—Part II

You have prepared your questions. You have interviewed someone. You have recorded their answers. You found out how they lived long ago. You did all of this in Part I of "Tell It Like It Was."

In Part II you will organize what you found out. You will make a topic outline. You will use the outline to write an oral history. Then others can find out how people lived long ago.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- What is the best way to organize your oral history?
- Should everyone's oral history be organized the same way?

Write an oral history.

HERE

1. Decide on a way to organize the information about the person you interviewed. Use the sample outline for ideas. Use the topics in the Sample Outline or make up your own topics.

Sample Outline

I. Personal information
  A. Name
  B. Birthday
  C Birthplace
II. Growing up
  A. City
  B. Neighborhood
  C. School(s)

continued

continued

D. Average Day
1. In school
2. Having fun

III. Working
A. Parents' jobs
B. Person's jobs

IV. Ethnic identity
A. Person's ethnic group(s)
B. Importance of ethnic identity

V. Important events from history and their influence

VI. How things have changed

2. Organize your information. Write a topic outline and group your answers by topic.
3. Write an oral history of the person you interviewed. Use your outline to tell their story.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Do oral histories tell more about history or more about people?

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Show your oral history to the person you interviewed.

1. Ask him or her to read it. See if they want to change it or add to it.
2. Make changes if you need to.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Are oral histories as important as formal histories? Why?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Do these alone or with others.

Add pictures to your oral history.

1. Draw them or take photographs.
2. Draw or photograph important places and important people. Include important events if you can.
3. Add maps, too, if they are important.

Write more oral histories.

1. Interview other people.
2. Use your questions. Use your outline.
3. Add pictures and maps, too

Make an oral history book.

1. Put all the oral histories together.
2. Add a table of contents.
3. Add more pictures and maps.
4. Make covers.
5. Donate your oral history book to your community center or library so others can use it.

The Philadelphia Jewish-Americans

History at a Glance

The focus of Jewish ethnic identity is religion. Jews have been persecuted for thousands of years because of their religious beliefs.

There were Jews living in Pennsylvania as early as 1680. Early Jewish-Americans were active members of Philadelphia's community life.

Many German Jews came to the United States between 1830 and 1880. They were looking for a better life.

Many German-Jewish immigrants started as peddlers. Some were successful and opened bigger businesses.

The German Jews lived in many Philadelphia neighborhoods.

The German Jews started Reform Judaism to make their religion more modern.

At first, Americans were not tolerant of the German Jews. As years passed, however, the German Jews blended into American society.

In 1882, the first Eastern European Jews came to Philadelphia. They came to escape terrible persecution. These new Jewish immigrants were very different from the German Jews.

Many Russian and Eastern European Jews settled in South Philadelphia. It became a thriving Jewish community, but soon Jews prospered and moved away.

Eastern European Jews had many skills that helped them find jobs. Many worked in the "needle trades."

Because they had lived in cities before, many Jews found it easier to adjust to life in Philadelphia.

Jewish immigrants quickly established a strong religious community in Philadelphia.

Because of their religious laws and their traditions of charity, Philadelphia's Jews started many social service agencies. They also started many cultural and educational organizations.

Jewish-Americans were active in America's early unions.

Because education is an important Jewish tradition, most Jewish-Americans went to school.

Many Jewish immigrants read special Yiddish and Hebrew ethnic newspapers.

Today few Jewish-Americans live in South and Southwest Philadelphia. Most have moved out to other areas where they still maintain their religious and cultural traditions.

Background

The focus of Jewish ethnic identity is religion. Jews have been persecuted for thousands of years because of their religious beliefs.

The Jews form a special kind of ethnic group. Their ethnic heritage is different from the ethnic heritage of Italian-Americans, Polish-Americans, or Irish-Americans. While the Italians, Poles, and Irish each immigrated from a single country in Europe, the Jews came from many different countries. The Jews all belong to the same ethnic group because they all share the same religious beliefs.

About 2,000 years ago most Jews lived in Palestine, in the Middle East. In those days few Jews left their homeland. When the ancient Romans conquered Palestine, Jews began to travel to other lands. They were soldiers, teachers, and colonists. They went to live in countries and cities all over the world. Many settled in European countries such as France, Poland, Germany, and Russia. The Jews, living in different countries, all had common religious beliefs, but they all practiced their religion in slightly different ways.

In many countries, the Jews were severely persecuted. People were suspicious of their religious beliefs. They were not allowed to practice their religion. Strict laws controlled their everyday life. In some places, they could not own land or hold many kinds of jobs. Jews had to earn their living doing jobs others could or would not do. In some cities they could only live in certain sections, called ghettos. Some think it is amazing that the Jews were able to survive under such conditions for hundreds of years. They did survive, though, and developed very strong families and communities. For most of these Jews, religion was the center of family and community life. Anyone who had religious knowledge was greatly respected.

Early History

There were Jews living in Pennsylvania as early as 1680. Early Jewish-Americans were active members of Philadelphia's community life.

Because Jews experienced so much discrimination, they were usually willing to travel anywhere where there was hope for a better life. There were Jews fleeing to America with Christopher Columbus. As early as 1680, there were a few Jews in Pennsylvania. The early Jewish immigrants were usually people from Spain, Portugal, or Holland. These people were usually educated. Few were poor.

During this early period of American history, Jews were generally well-treated. There was little discrimination against them. In Pennsylvania the Jews had won the right to hold office. They were permitted to hold any job they wanted and to practice their religion openly. Jewish immigrants became active members of community life in Philadelphia. Many became businessmen. Early Jewish immigrants helped to fight for American freedom in the Revolutionary War. A Polish Jew from Philadelphia, Haym Salomon, raised a lot of money to help pay for the war.

Religious life was very important to these early Jewish immigrants in Philadelphia. As soon as enough Jews moved to Philadelphia, they organized a congregation for worship. It was founded in the 1740s and named Mikveh Israel (Hope of Israel). In 1782 a synagogue, a place of worship, was built for the congregation. The congregation still worships at Fourth Street above Market Street.

One famous Philadelphia Jew during this early period was Rebecca Gratz. She was known for her charm and beauty. She was dedicated to her community, too. Rebecca Gratz founded the Jewish Sunday School Society so that Jewish children would have a religious education. It was the first Hebrew school in America. Later the Jewish Sunday School Society also taught work skills to new immigrants.

As the years passed, many more Jewish immigrants came to Philadelphia. They came from different places. Most came at two different times. The first group of these newcomers came from Germany.

Early Experiences in Philadelphia—German Jews, 1830-1880

IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA

Many German Jews came to America between 1830 and 1880. They were looking for a better life.

The German Jews came to America at the same time as many German Christians. German immigrants, both Jews and Christians, fled from war in their homeland. The war made it hard to earn a living in Germany. Also, there was little political freedom and almost no hope for a better life. For the German Jews there was no hope at all. Although they were not persecuted, Jews were treated badly in Germany. Special laws restricted their lives. They had to pay special taxes. They could not live where they wanted to live. All in all, German Jews were eager to come to America.

NEIGHBORHOODS

The German Jews lived in many Philadelphia neighborhoods.

Early German-Jewish immigrants lived in many Philadelphia neighborhoods. Many of them lived in North Philadelphia. By 1880, though, they had earned enough money so that they were no longer poor. They had improved their lives by hard work and were able to live in comfortable neighborhoods.

JOBS

Many German-Jewish immigrants started as peddlers. Some were successful and opened bigger businesses.

The German Jews came to America with little money. To earn a living, many Jews became peddlers. They traveled to farms and small communities throughout Pennsylvania selling clothing and household items. Some immigrants remained peddlers all their lives. Others built on their success as peddlers and went into bigger businesses. Many opened stores in Philadelphia. Others opened factories for making clothes. They used the newly-invented sewing machine, popularized by Isaac Singer, a Jewish-American. Adam Gimbel was a former peddler. He started Gimbel's

Department Store. It sold the new ready-made, machine-sewed clothing.

RELIGION

The German Jews started Reform Judaism to make their religion more modern.

In the United States, the German Jews established their own communities and synagogues. They also started a new religious movement called Reform Judaism. These Jews believed that Reform Judaism was a more modern religion. It would put their religion more in tune with their new American life. Before Reform Judaism, all Jews worshipped the same way. They had the same beliefs and they practiced the same customs and rituals. In Reform Judaism the basic religious beliefs were the same, but some religious practices, customs, and rituals were changed. They were less formal. Reform Judaism made the Jewish religion easier for Jews to practice in their new country. It also made it easier for non-Jews in America to understand. Isaac Leeser, a Philadelphia Rabbi, contributed to this Reform Movement. He translated the Jewish Bible and Prayer Book from Hebrew into English. By 1880, most Jewish synagogues in Philadelphia used this reformed tradition of worship.

Adjustment to American Life—German Jews

At first, Americans were not tolerant of the German Jews. As years passed, however, the German Jews blended into American society.

Many Americans were suspicious of the German Jews. They thought of them as strange foreigners. Americans worried that these strange foreigners would create problems for them. They did not want German Jews to take part in the government. Even Jewish-Americans who had been in the United States a long time saw these new immigrants as a nuisance. Some older Jewish immigrants did not think that the new foreigners were equal to themselves. They saw them as troublemakers.

As the years passed, the German immigrants adjusted to life in the United States. Most German Jews blended into

American society so well that they could not be identified as foreigners. They thought of themselves as Americans, and others thought of them as Americans, too. After 1880, a new larger group of Jewish immigrants arrived in Philadelphia. Most of these Jews came from Russia. Others immigrated from Eastern European countries like Poland and Rumania. Now the German immigrants were the "old-timers" and they thought the Russian Jews were strange foreigners.

Early Experiences in Philadelphia— Russian, Polish, and Rumanian Jews, 1880-1920

IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA

In 1882 the first Eastern European Jews came to Philadelphia. They came to escape terrible persecution. These new Jewish immigrants were very different from the German Jews.

Life in the Eastern European countries of Russia, Poland, and Rumania was hard and unjust for Jews. There was a lot of discrimination against Jewish people—even more than there had been in Germany. In Russia, for example, Jews could only live in certain areas of the country, called *the Pale*. Laws kept many Jews from earning a living anywhere else. In the 1880s many of these areas were attacked by Russian soldiers. Homes and stores were burned, and many Jews were murdered. Because living conditions were so terrible, thousands of Jews decided to immigrate to the United States. Sometimes even entire Jewish towns came. In 1882 the first group of these Russian-Jewish immigrants came to Philadelphia. There were 360 of them, and the Jewish community made special arrangements for their arrival. A train took them from the dock to a railroad depot in West Philadelphia. There, the Russian Jews were housed and fed. A school was started to teach them "American." Before long these first immigrants found jobs and new homes all over the state. Only a few of this first group settled in Philadelphia. Hundreds of thousands more Russian and Eastern European Jews came to Philadelphia between 1882 and 1920. Most of them stayed here.

These new Jewish-Americans were very different from the

Jewish-Americans of German background. In Germany, the German Jews had lived among other Germans. They shared German culture, education, and customs. Except for their religion, they were similar to other Germans. The Russian and Eastern European Jews had not been part of the larger society. They were forced to live by themselves in special areas. Because they were isolated, they developed their own culture. They often used their own language, Hebrew. They had separate schools and very strict religious customs and practices. These Jews brought their religious traditions and their special culture to America. To most Americans, they were foreigners and outsiders. Even to some German Jews they seemed totally different. Many Americans did not like their foreign dress, customs, and strict religion. As before, people feared that these Jewish newcomers would cause trouble. Because of this, these new Jewish immigrants had to form their own communities and synagogues. Only after many years were the Eastern European and the Russian Jews accepted in American society.

Many Russian and Eastern European Jews settled in South Philadelphia. It became a thriving Jewish community, but soon Jews prospered and moved away.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Most Russian and Eastern European Jewish immigrants settled in one of three Philadelphia neighborhoods. Two of these, Port Richmond and Northern Liberties, were in North Philadelphia. The third and largest area of Jewish settlement was in South Philadelphia. At the peak of Jewish immigration, about 175,000 Jews lived in the area between Second and Sixth Streets, running from Lombard Street south to Washington Avenue.

At first, Jewish immigrants chose to live in South Philadelphia because that's where the ships that brought them landed. Also, rents were cheap and jobs were plentiful in South Philadelphia. Immigrants liked the bustling business streets like South Street. They could buy anything they needed there. They could sell things to others, too. Later, the Jewish immigrants were attracted to South Philadelphia's neighborhoods because many Jews already lived there.

The South Philadelphia Jewish community was lively and interesting. There were many stores and businesses. The people lived in boarding houses or in apartments over their stores. Some lived in small row houses, too. Yiddish and Hebrew were spoken everywhere. There were many small synagogues where Jews from different European communities could follow old and familiar traditions. By 1893 there were 45 different synagogues in South Philadelphia. Some were in store fronts. There were special schools where Jewish boys learned Hebrew. Jews could bathe in one of the many public bathhouses. Special restaurants sold meats prepared according to Jewish religious laws.

In these Jewish-American neighborhoods, all kinds of goods were bought and sold. Fourth Street was called Pushcart Lane because vendors sold food, clothing, and household goods from stalls and carts. In 1893, this street looked like today's Italian Market on Ninth Street. The best silk in the city could be bought there.

Gaskill Street, between Fourth and Fifth Streets, was the center of South Philadelphia's Jewish artistic community. Hertz Imber, the composer of *Hatikva* (Hope), Israel's national anthem, lived there. There was a Yiddish theater. The same building was also used for community functions and union meetings.

The South Philadelphia neighborhoods were a stopping place, but not always a permanent home for many Jewish immigrants and their children. As soon as their businesses prospered or they were able to earn enough money, many Jews moved from these neighborhoods. They found homes in other parts of the city and suburbs.

JOBS

Eastern European Jews had many skills that helped them find jobs. Many worked in the "needle trades."

The Russian and Eastern European Jews had to find jobs as quickly as possible. In this way, they were like most other immigrants. They were unlike many immigrants, however, because most of them had some work skills. Also, many could read and write. Many other ethnic immigrants knew only how to farm when they arrived in the United States. Most Jewish immigrants were not farmers. They had learned other skills in Europe doing jobs that others did not want to do. In Philadelphia many Jewish immigrants were excellent tailors and they used their skills to get jobs in the "needle trades." Both Jewish men and women worked in the clothing industry. Often they learned about these jobs from friends and relatives.

Not all Jewish immigrants had jobs sewing. There were Jewish-American carpenters, masons, shoemakers, and bakers in these years. There were peddlers, shopkeepers, and cigar makers. There were Jews who became property owners and landlords. They often rented houses, stores, and apartments to other immigrants. It did not take long for many of these poor Jewish immigrants and their children to improve their life. They worked hard and went to school. They used their skills to get their first jobs. Then they got better jobs. Eventually, many Jewish families saved enough money to send their children to college.

Adjustment to American Life—Russian, Polish, and Rumanian Jews

Because they had lived in cities before, many Jews found it easier to adjust to life in Philadelphia.

Like many other immigrants, the Jews had to adjust to a new life in Philadelphia. They had to learn a new language and they needed jobs. Because most Jews lived in cities before they came to America, they knew how to get along in cities. Because of this, adjusting to life in Philadelphia was easier for the Jews than it was for many other immigrants. Most did not have much trouble finding work. Many Jewish immigrants had some job skills. Most did not have trouble finding a place to live, either. Most were used to living in poor sections of cities. In Philadelphia, Russian, Polish, and Rumanian Jews all helped each other. They felt responsible for each other and they felt a sense of duty to each other. This sense of duty was based on their religion.

Jewish immigrants quickly established a strong religious community in Philadelphia.

THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

The Russian, Polish, and Rumanian Jews built a strong religious community wherever they lived. These Jews were devout in their beliefs. They studied the *Torah*, the five Books of Moses from the

Old Testament. They believed in following the Ten Commandments. They worshipped every Sabbath (from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday). They believed in following all their Jewish religious customs, traditions, and laws. Because their religious life was very important to them, they wanted a strong religious community in Philadelphia. They created a religious community of many synagogues and hundreds of social service and ethnic organizations.

To the Jewish immigrants a synagogue was a very important part of life. It was a symbol of their faith and their ethnic identity. It was a place to worship and learn. In their new Philadelphia neighborhoods, Jews could not feel comfortable until they had a synagogue. According to their religious law Jews always worship in groups. Without a neighborhood synagogue, they had to worship in other neighborhoods with strangers. A neighborhood synagogue allowed them to pray and to learn together with friends and neighbors. A neighborhood synagogue enabled them to meet other Jews who could help them adjust to American life.

JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

Because of their religious laws and their traditions of charity, Philadelphia's Jews started many social service agencies. They also started many cultural and educational organizations.

All Jews are required to help the needy. It is a religious law and a tradition called *tzedaka* (charity). To fulfill this duty they often start charitable organizations. When the Russian and Eastern European Jews arrived in Philadelphia, there were many Jewish social service organizations to help them. Some of these organizations helped immigrants adjust to their new country. Some provided food and shelter. Others offered job training, education, or English instruction. One, Mount Sinai Hospital, provided medical care. This South Philadelphia hospital is now Albert Einstein Hospital's Daroff Division.

The Philadelphia Jewish community also started a number of new organizations to help immigrants. There were too many Russian and Eastern European newcomers for the older organizations. Also, the older organizations often did not meet the needs of these newer Jewish immigrants. One of the best-known of these new groups was the Association of Jewish Immigrants. This group helped immigrants from the minute they arrived in Philadelphia by giving advice on immigration rules. It housed and fed immigrants until they found houses and jobs. Today, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) helps immigrants with similar problems.

Many other groups helped immigrants. Some ran boarding houses. Some provided food and others provided jobs. Soon there were too many charities. Things became confused and the charities were not helping as well as they should have. The leaders of these groups decided to join together. By joining together, they could do more and would be more efficient. Fourteen groups joined together in 1901 and became the United Hebrew Charities. Today, this group is called the Federation of Jewish Agencies (FJA) and has more than 50 member groups. Today, the FJA helps all needy persons, not just Jewish immigrants.

Many Jewish organizations met the immigrants' basic needs. They helped them get food, housing, or jobs. Other groups provided cultural, educational, and recreational programs for Jewish immigrants. The Young Men's Hebrew Association of South Philadelphia was one such example. The Settlement Music School was another. This school, started by two Jewish women, gave music lessons to immigrant children. Another cultural organization, the Graphic Arts Club (now the Fleisher Art Memorial), gave free art lessons. All three of these organizations still exist today.

Jewish-Americans were active in America's early unions.

UNIONS

Poor working conditions were common in the old days. This was particularly true for immigrants. Many work places in Philadelphia were sweatshops. Workers did their jobs in hot, crowded rooms with poor lighting and ventilation. They worked long hours for low pay. It was not unusual to work 70 hours a week. Employers often took advantage of the immigrant workers.

Jewish immigrants in Philadelphia were not always willing to accept these working conditions. They wanted to improve things for themselves and for other workers. One way they tried to do this was by starting unions. Unions are workers' organizations. In a union, workers band together to make sure working conditions are good. They see to it that employers do not take advantage of them. Jewish-Americans became leaders of several unions. They bargained to shorten workers' hours, improve working conditions, and increase pay. They made employers bring more light and air into the sweatshops.

EDUCATION

Because education is an important Jewish tradition, most Jewish-Americans went to school.

Education is an important Jewish tradition. Jews have always believed in education. Every Jew is expected to be able to read the Bible, so every Jew is expected to learn to read. Philadelphia's Jewish immigrants thought that a good education would make their children good Jews and successful Americans. They worked hard and made many sacrifices so their children could go to school. Jewish parents believed that a good education would help their children get good jobs.

Most Jewish-American children went to public schools. A large number went on to college.

Jewish-American adults also wanted an education. They wanted to learn more about America so that they could be successful in their new country. Many went to evening schools to learn English or job skills, and to study for citizenship.

The Philadelphia Jewish-American community founded two colleges, Gratz College and Dropsie University. At these schools young people studied Jewish traditions and culture.

NEWSPAPERS

Many Jewish immigrants read special Yiddish and Hebrew ethnic newspapers.

Like other immigrants, many Jews learned about America by reading special ethnic newspapers. These newspapers were often written in Yiddish with Hebrew letters. Many newcomers could not read English. Others preferred reading the news in Yiddish. *The Jewish Exponent* and the *Jewish Daily Forward* were two Philadelphia newspapers that told Jewish immigrants about American life. Readers of these papers learned about becoming citizens, or about health care. They learned about the American political system and about the city of Philadelphia. They found out where to get jobs. These newspapers also strengthened Jewish ethnic pride by reporting the news of the Jewish community.

Jewish-Americans Today

Today, few Jewish-Americans live in South and Southwest Philadelphia. Most have moved to other areas where they still maintain their religious and cultural traditions.

Today, Philadelphia's Jewish-Americans are proud of their strong Jewish community. More than 350,000 Jews live in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. Philadelphia has the third largest Jewish population of any city in the United States. Philadelphia's Jewish-Americans still have a strong religious community. There are more than 60 synagogues in Philadelphia. There are many more in the suburbs. Jews today attend services regularly. Many still read Hebrew and Yiddish newspapers such as *The Jewish Exponent* and *Jewish Daily Forward.*

Jews still support many social, charitable, and cultural institutions. One organization established to serve immigrants, the Daroff Division of Albert Einstein Hospital, still provides health care in South Philadelphia. Other organizations such as the Settlement Music School and the Fleisher Art Memorial offer art and music lessons in the old neighborhoods. The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society still helps Jewish immigrants from other countries. Jews still believe in education and learning. They still think it is important to help others and to end religious prejudice and racial hatred. They still believe in having a strong Jewish religious community.

South and Southwest Philadelphia, however, are no longer strong Jewish communities. Only about 2,000 to 3,000 Jews still live in these areas. Most are senior citizens, living in the old immigrant neighborhoods like Whitman and Hawthorne. A few live in neighborhoods that once were considered suburbs, like Eastwick. Today most Jewish-Americans live in other areas of Philadelphia. Some of these ethnic neighborhoods are in Overbrook or in the Far Northeast sections of the city. Most Jewish-owned businesses have moved elsewhere in the city, although some can still be seen in the old ethnic neighborhoods. For example, Jewish delicatessens, Kosher butchers, and fabric merchants still line Pushcart Lane.

Although many of Philadelphia's Jewish-Americans prefer to live in other neighborhoods, they still have many of their early traditions and still share many of the same values they had as immigrants.

Philadelphia's Jewish-Americans brought a strong ethnic heritage with them to America. They were proud of their rich traditions of religious and community life. The Jewish community in Philadelphia has kept these traditions alive. Each generation of Jewish-Americans has added to the heritage that was given to them. Today, the whole Philadelphia community benefits from that heritage. Jewish-Americans are proud of their heritage and they are determined to pass it on to their children and grandchildren.

Jewish-American Heritage

Jewish-American heritage is the story about the success of the Jewish people in the United States. It is a story built upon the accomplishments of many people and about a strong ethnic group.

Deeply rooted in religious faith, the traditions and values of Jewish heritage are older than those of many other ethnic groups. Jewish traditions began many thousands of years ago. They are as old as the history of the Bible. Jewish-Americans are proud that their heritage is so old and that their ancestors were able to keep their faith and traditions alive despite discrimination and persecution. They are proud that their ancestors came to America and brought their faith and traditions with them.

Individual achievement is a tradition in Jewish culture. Throughout history there have been many well-known Jews. These men and women succeeded despite discrimination against them. Names such as Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister of England, Felix Mendelssohn, composer, and Martin Buber, theologian, remind us how much Jews have contributed to life and thought all over the world.

Countless numbers of immigrant Jews, their children, and grandchildren also became well known. Jewish-Americans point with pride to their contributions to our culture. Albert Einstein, physicist, and Jonas Salk, discoverer of the polio vaccine, both made important scientific contributions. Julius Rosenwald, of Sears Roebuck, and Levi Strauss, designer of blue jeans, were successful businessmen. Saul Bellow and Arthur Miller are writers who have enriched American literature. Eugene Ormandy of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Richard Rodgers and Irving Berlin, composers, Robert Peters and Beverly Sills, opera singers, have given us many hours of musical enjoyment. Hank Greenberg, Sandy Koufax, Mark Spitz, and Steve Stone are remembered in the sports world. Goldie Hawn, Woody Allen, and Barbra Streisand are popular entertainers. Henry Kissinger is only one of the many noted Jewish-American government leaders.

There are also hundreds of Philadelphia Jewish-Americans who are well-known and successful. For example, Ed Rendell, Morton Solomon, and Joan Spector serve in the city government. David Brenner and Jack Klugman are successful Jewish-American entertainers from Philadelphia. Walter Annenberg, a leading American publisher, is from Philadelphia. The president of Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), William Paley, is a Philadelphia Jewish-American. Pride in these people and their accomplishments strengthens the ethnic identity of many Philadelphia Jewish-Americans.

In Philadelphia, as elsewhere, the Jewish family plays a central role in fostering ethnic identity. Throughout history, family ties have been very strong in most Jewish families. Jews often had no one to ask for help except family members. This made family members especially loyal to one another.

Many Jews also look to the family to pass Jewish traditions from one generation to the next. Jewish children get much of their religious education from family members and many of the Jewish religious observances take place within the family group. The rituals of keeping the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship are centered in the home. Holidays, a time to remember Jewish history and celebrate ethnic identity, also revolve around the family. Families make a special effort to get together at this time. *Yom Kippur*, a major holiday, is the holiest day on the Jewish calendar. It is a day when Jewish families fast and pray in their synagogues. On *Yom Kippur* Jews ask forgiveness from God and from other people. *Rosh Hashana*, the Jewish New Year, and *Passover* are two other Jewish holidays. *Hanukah* has become a popular Jewish-American holiday. On this holiday, Jewish families reaffirm their beliefs. They light candles, give each other gifts, and play special games.

The ethnic identity of Jewish-Americans, centered around family life, is extended and strengthened by the larger Jewish community. The key organization in the Jewish community is the synagogue. Jewish-Americans support many activities and services through their synagogues. They hold religious services and receive religious education there. They sponsor social, recreational, and charitable programs at their synagogues.

The synagogue is only one institution that helps preserve Jewish-American ethnic identity. There are many others such as B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Committee, B'rith Shalom. These groups provide a wide variety of educational, charitable, religious, and professional functions for Philadelphia's Jewish-Americans.

Many organizations in Philadelphia support Israel. Israel is the Jews' homeland. It is in the Middle East near the ancient Jewish state of Palestine. It is a place where Jews can live without being discriminated against. Many Jewish-Americans support the state of Israel. They feel that their homeland is an important part of their heritage. They support Israel by participating in cultural or educational exchange programs and by traveling there. Also, Philadelphia's Jews raise large amounts of money for Israel. Jewish-Americans strengthen their ethnic identity by activities that support the state of Israel and the freedom of Jewish-Americans in the United States.

All the News: Ethnic and Neighborhood Newspapers

Do you read newspapers? Many people do. Newspapers tell us the news of the day. Sometimes they also tell us other things. For instance, some newspapers tell us sports scores, the weather, or the price of food.

Long ago, there were special newspapers. These were special ethnic or neighborhood newspapers. They were written especially for certain ethnic groups. People read these newspapers for many reasons. For some people, these newspapers were a source of news about the city and the world. For others, they were a way to learn about America. Sometimes they were a link to the homeland. For many people, they were a way to maintain ethnic identity.

Many of these special newspapers still exist. Does anyone in your family read a special ethnic or neighborhood newspaper?

THINK ABOUT THIS

- How many special neighborhood or ethnic newspapers do you think there are in your city?
- Why do people read these special neighborhood or ethnic newspapers today?

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Find out about your city's ethnic and neighborhood newspapers.

1. Make a list of these special newspapers. Look in the telephone book under "newspapers." Use the *Yellow Pages*.
2. Choose two to investigate. Make sure each newspaper that you choose is for a different ethnic group or for a different neighborhood.

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continued

3. Get a copy of each one. Read each if you can. Make a list of what is in it. Look for news stories, sports stories, editorials, ads, or comics. Look for other things, too. Look for things that reflect a certain ethnic group or neighborhood.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- How do the newspapers reflect a certain ethnic group or neighborhood?

HERE

Write and print your own special newspaper.

1. Write stories about your neighborhood and the people living there. Write about your family friends and neighbors. Write stories that reflect the ethnic groups of your neighborhood.
2. Make up ads for your papers. Make up ads for stores in your neighborhood. Or ask the store owners to make up their own ads.
3. Include other things like comics, neighborhood sports news, and editorials. Remember, name your newspaper, too.
4. Plan the newspaper. Decide where to put each story. Decide where to put the ads, comics, and editorials. Look at other newspapers for ideas. Decide where to put the name.
5. If you can, print your newspaper. Type the stories and editorials. Draw the ads and comics. Make copies for people in the neighborhood and distribute them.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- How do today's ethnic and neighborhood newspapers strengthen the ethnic or neighborhood pride of their readers?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

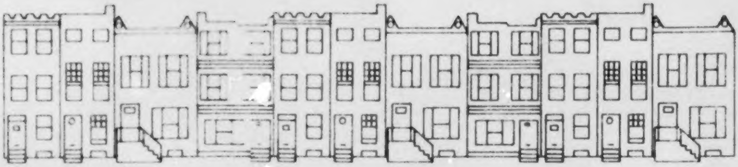
Do these alone or with others.

Find out about special newspapers from long ago.

1. Do research at the library. Go to the newspaper section.
2. Ask to see copies of old special ethnic or neighborhood newspapers from your city.
3. See what is in them. Also see which ethnic groups or neighborhoods they reflect.

Find out more about your city's ethnic and neighborhood newspapers.

1. Visit one of these special newspapers. Choose one and make an appointment for a visit.
2. Talk to the editor, if you can. Talk to reporters and photographers, too. Ask them how they write and print the special newspapers. Ask why they think special ethnic or neighborhood newspapers are important.



What's So Special About the Polish?

Helena Petrinski lives in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. She has just come back from Philadelphia where she was visiting her uncle and aunt. While in Philadelphia, she went to her cousin's wedding. She had fun, but now she is glad to be back in Hazleton. She is telling her mother about Philadelphia and about the wedding she went to.

Helena: Uncle Max and Aunt Gert have a nice house. It's right near the Delaware River. There are parks down the street and everything.

Mother: Sounds wonderful, honey. Maybe someday your father and I will get to see their new house.

Helena: Yeah, you'd love it. Only their neighborhood isn't as Polish as ours. It's mixed. There are a lot of Polish-Americans living nearby, though. There's even a Kosciuszko Club down the street—and a Polish Church, St. Stanislaus.

Mother: Is that where the wedding was?

Helena: That's where the ceremony was. The reception afterwards was at a swimming club. It wasn't too far away.

Mother: Well? How was the wedding?

Helena: Oh, Mommy! It was beautiful. It was really Polish. I didn't expect it to be. You know, because they live in Philadelphia and all.

Mother: Well dear, you know most Poles who came to this state did not go to Philadelphia at first. They came to places like Hazleton. Still, there are quite a few Polish-Americans living in Philadelphia. And, as for being really Polish, we're all really Polish. No matter where we live, Polish-Americans are proud of their heritage and we try to keep it alive. Now tell me about the wedding.

Helena: Okay, okay! Well, the ceremony was beautiful, with Wendy all in white and Ray in a tuxedo. Wendy's dress was an old-fashioned one. She even put on the bride's apron later on at the reception. The Mass was really impressive—a High Mass with a choir. They said their wedding vows in Polish and English. I didn't even know Wendy spoke Polish. But a lot of the people there did. I felt kinda funny because I didn't.

Mother: Don't worry. If you keep studying, you'll learn. Sister Ann says you're doing fine. Now what about the reception? Were there lots of people?

Helena: Golly! Tons! It was so crowded and hot, I thought I'd faint. The band was great. They played real music, popular music—not just polkas.

Mother: Polkas *are* real music.

Helena: I know, I know. But anyway, we danced and ate and drank, and danced and ate and drank some more. I never saw so much food. I've had enough pierogi for a year.

Mother: What else?

Helena: Well, right after cutting the cake, Wendy and Ray went from table to table. They were toasted at each table and everyone pinned money on Wendy's apron. Poor Ray, he almost passed out from all the toasts. But I'll bet he can buy a new car with all the money they got. Of course everyone had to kiss the bride and shake Ray's hand.

Mother: That sounds like a good time. How long did it last?

Helena: Four or five hours. Then we all went back to Aunt Gert's and ate some more. It was amazing.

Mother: What time did you finally go to bed?

Helena: I stayed up real late. We got to taking and arguing, and discussing what's important to Polish-Americans.

Mother: I'll bet *that* was quite a discussion. What did you decide?

Helena: Well, everyone had their own opinion. Uncle Max said it was pride in work. He said Polish-Americans have always worked hard for what they have. And they're proud of that. He sounded like Daddy.

Mother: They're both right.

Helena: I know, but it still sounds like a lecture.

Mother: What did Aunt Gert say?

Helena: She said it was the Polish-American family. For Aunt Gert, family was the most important.

Mother: She's right, too. You know we stick together and help each other in Hazleton, both the Petrinskis and the Kruschinskis.

Helena: Yeah, I know. They seem to be like that in Philadelphia, too. Ray's Uncle Stosh said freedom was the most important thing to the Poles. I think he was a little drunk. After telling us all about Polish history—you know, how Poland's hardly ever been a free country—he told us all about famous Poles in American history. Then he got all fired up and started talking about the Polish labor unions and how awful Communists are. Lucky for us his wife, Rita, was able to stop him long enough to give her opinion. He was getting a little obnoxious.

Mother: What was Rita's opinion?

Helena: Rita said religion—Catholicism—was the most important thing. She said the church was responsible for the way Poles have kept their heritage alive. She talked a little about Polish history, too. But I think her main point was the way religion keeps our heritage alive today. I had to agree. For instance, most every Polish kid I know goes to a Catholic school. And a lot are like St. Stan's—you know—they teach Polish and Polish history as well as religion and the other stuff. Not only that, most of our neat holiday celebrations and customs are for religious holidays—Christmas and Easter, for example. And look at Wendy's wedding. Most people there liked the High Mass best of all.

Mother: Yeah, I think I'd get along with Rita.

Helena: I think so, too. She's neat.

Mother: Well, what did Helena think?

Helena: Me? I think it's the whole package. You know, it seems to me that all of these things—religion, love of freedom, close families, hard work—are all important. I mean, I'm really proud I'm a Polish-American. I always have been. I think it makes me special. And all the things we talked about that night at Aunt Gert's are what makes Polish-Americans special.

Helena's mother, very proud of what her daughter has said, gives her a big hug.

What's Cooking? An Ethnic Feast

Food is a good way to share ethnic heritage. Food plays an important part in the history and culture of most ethnic groups. Americans eat ethnic food every day. Often we eat ethnic food without knowing it is ethnic food. Did you know that hot dogs, waffles, and hamburgers are all ethnic foods?

Many special ethnic foods have not changed for years and years. For example, Jews have eaten matzo (a special bread that looks a lot like a cracker) for over 3,000 years—ever since the Exodus, when the Jews left Egypt with Moses. Today's matzos are basically the same as they were then. Chitterlings—pigs intestines—are another food that has not changed very much. Afro-Americans first ate chitterlings over 200 years ago. It was almost the only kind of meat the black slaves could get. White slave owners usually threw it away. Even though most blacks today eat any meat they want, many still enjoy chitterlings.

Not all of America's ethnic foods have stayed the same, however. Some have changed. Authentic Italian pizza has only tomato sauce on top. In Italy the peasant farmers who made pizza were too poor to use other things. So were the first Italian immigrants. Today, we eat pizza with cheese and other toppings, as well as tomato sauce.

Finding out about ethnic food is an easy and fun way to find out about different ethnic groups and their cultures.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Are there any foods we eat today that are *not* ethnic foods?

Plan an ethnic menu.

HERE

1. Choose ethnic foods from your ethnic group. Choose ones you have eaten or ones you would like to eat that are linked to your ethnic group.
2. Write your choices on a piece of paper.

-or-

Plan a multiethnic menu.

1. Choose ethnic foods from other groups. Choose ones you have eaten or ones you would like to eat.
2. Write your choices on a piece of paper. List the ethnic groups linked to each food next to your choices.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- If you were fixing these ethnic foods, where would you go to find the ingredients?

Cook an ethnic food dish.

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

1. Choose one ethnic food and find out how to cook it.
2. Do research. Look in cookbooks. Ask someone at home. Find an ethnic restaurant and ask there.
3. List the ingredients. Write a recipe that tells how to prepare it.
4. Prepare and eat the ethnic dish. Perhaps someone at home can help you fix it and eat it, too.
5. Tell others in your group about the ethnic food you prepared and ate. Tell how you prepared it. Tell how it tasted.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Are there any ethnic foods that are similar to one another? Why?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Do these alone or with others.

Find out more about an ethnic food.

1. Choose one of the foods on your list, perhaps the one you cooked and ate.
2. Find out the history of the ethnic food you chose. Do research. Look in the library. Sometimes cookbooks tell foods' histories. Someone at home might know. Restaurant cooks might know, too.

Have an ethnic feast.

1. Prepare all the foods from your ethnic or multiethnic menu.
2. Eat a little of each.

Make an ethnic or multiethnic cookbook.

1. Choose different ethnic foods.
2. Find recipes that tell how to cook them. Find out the history of each one, too.
3. Put the recipes and histories into a book. Illustrate the cookbook, if you want.

Have a neighborhood ethnic feast.

1. Invite everyone in your neighborhood to an ethnic feast.
2. Ask each to prepare an ethnic food to share.
3. Ask each to explain how to cook the ethnic food.

Eat in an ethnic restaurant.

1. Eat ethnic foods you never ate before.
2. Find out how each is cooked. Ask the chef. Find out the history of each ethnic food, too.

The Philadelphia Polish-Americans

History at a Glance

The Polish people have kept their strong ethnic identity, both in Poland and in America.

Poles have been part of American history since 1608. Many Polish-Americans fought bravely in the American Revolutionary War.

After 1870, many Polish immigrants came to America. Many were poor farmers looking for a better way to earn a living.

Few Polish immigrants stayed in Philadelphia. Most returned to Poland and others found jobs elsewhere in Pennsylvania.

The first large Polish-American neighborhoods in South Philadelphia were near Front Street, between Pine Street and Washington Avenue. There were other large Polish-American neighborhoods in other parts of the city, too.

Many of the first Polish immigrants worked as general laborers, doing jobs few others wanted to do. Polish-Americans were proud of their work, and most worked hard. Soon they moved into better jobs.

There were many Polish-Americans ready to help Polish immigrants adjust to life in Philadelphia.

The Catholic Church and the neighborhood parish were very important organizations for Polish immigrants. There were special Polish nationality parishes in Philadelphia. They helped Polish-Americans in many ways. They also helped keep Polish ethnic identity strong.

There were many Polish-American self-help and ethnic organizations in Philadelphia.

At first, few Polish immigrants were educated and few sent their children to school. Later, education became important in helping Polish-Americans adjust and succeed in America.

Many went to Polish Catholic schools where they learned the Polish language, culture, and heritage.

Special Polish-language newspapers helped many to adjust to American life.

Today, Philadelphia's Polish-Americans live in many parts of the city. They still keep many of their old customs and traditions alive in order to keep their ethnic identity strong.

Background

The Polish people have always kept a strong ethnic identity, both in Poland and in America.

For most of Polish history, foreign rulers have governed Poland. These rulers have been from Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. Long periods of foreign rule have not changed the Poles' love for their country. Nor did they change the Poles' national identity. No matter who ruled them, the Poles kept their own language and culture. They kept their ethnic identity, too. They wouldn't give it up for Germans, Austrians, or Russians. In America, most Poles have the same strong feelings. They love Poland and they love their ethnic identity. Wherever they are, Poles want to keep their connection with Poland and with their Polish identity.

Early History

Poles have been part of American history since 1608. Many Polish-Americans fought bravely in the American Revolutionary War.

Polish immigrants have been part of American history for a long time. The first Poles settled in Jamestown, Virginia in 1608. They came to work in the timber industry. A few Poles came to William Penn's colony in Pennsylvania. Like many others, they were looking for religious freedom. During the American Revolutionary War, about 100 Polish soldiers came to fight with the Americans. The most famous of these Polish freedom fighters were Casimir Pulaski and Thaddeus Kosciuszko. These men were heroes. They fought bravely and were greatly honored.

In the century after American independence, only a small number of Poles came to the United States and to Philadelphia. Those immigrants who did come were usually wealthy and well-educated. Most came looking for political freedom. They were escaping Poland's foreign rulers.

Larger numbers of Polish immigrants began to arrive in the United States after 1870. These new immigrants were poor farmers. They were not educated. Few had the skills to get good jobs in an industrial city like Philadelphia. It is this group of Polish immigrants that we will study more closely.

After 1870, many Polish immigrants came to America. Many were poor farmers looking for a better way to earn a living.

REASONS FOR IMMIGRATION

The Poles who came to the United States after 1870 came for many different reasons. Farmers came because they were having trouble earning a living. The Polish farms were small and the Polish population was becoming larger. Polish farms couldn't provide enough food for all the people. Many farmers overworked their farms. The soil, poor to begin with, got poorer and many crops failed. With nothing to sell, the farmers had no way to earn money. Many came to America because they had lost their farms in Poland. The taxes were too high for them to pay. Others came to find new jobs in American industry. Still others fled Poland so they would not be drafted into their foreign ruler's army. When Poland became an independent country in 1918, a few immigrated to this country because they did not like the new Polish government.

Few Polish immigrants stayed in Philadelphia. Most returned to Poland and others found jobs elsewhere in Pennsylvania.

IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA

Many Poles were migrant workers. They traveled around Poland and Europe looking for work. Those that left Poland planned to go back to their homes after they had earned some money. Soon though, the Polish immigrants discovered that traveling to the United States was cheaper than traveling around Europe. Wages were higher here, too. Even after coming to the United States, most still expected to return to Poland after they had made enough money. Few planned to stay in the United States.

The immigrants often sold all of their personal belongings to buy a ticket to the United States. Sometimes a family would pool its money to send a father, son, uncle, or cousin. Sometimes immigrants were lucky enough to have relatives in this country who were able to send them a ticket for the trip. For Polish immigrants, travel to the United States was easy. There were many passenger and cargo ships in Germany that were headed for New York or Philadelphia. Poles simply left Poland for Germany and boarded German ships.

These early Polish immigrants wrote with enthusiasm about life in America. Their letters bragged about high wages and plentiful work. They often exaggerated about living conditions and the good life in America. When these letters reached their relatives and friends in Poland, more and more Poles decided to come here.

Most of the Polish immigrants did not intend to stay in America. They planned only to save their money and go back and buy land in Poland. Almost two-thirds did return to their homeland. Because job opportunities for Polish immigrants were limited in Philadelphia, many who landed at Philadelphia's ports did not stay in the city. They settled in small communities in other parts of the state. They found jobs in the coal mining or steelmaking regions. Some came to Philadelphia after they had learned English and had gotten some job skills. Then they found work and stayed. As time passed, fewer immigrants returned to Poland. More and more stayed in the United States. They decided that life here was better.

Because most looked for jobs elsewhere in Pennsylvania, and because so many returned home, there were never very many Polish-Americans in Philadelphia. As late as 1920, there were only about 50,000 Poles in the city. This ethnic group was smaller than other ethnic groups in our city. There were many more Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans, Jewish-Americans, and Afro-Americans.

Early Experiences in Philadelphia
1870-1920

NEIGHBORHOODS

The first large Polish-American neighborhoods in South Philadelphia were near Front Street, between Pine Street and Washington Avenue. There were other large Polish-American neighborhoods in other parts of the city, too.

In Philadelphia, Polish immigrants lived close to wherever they found work. In those days, workers walked to their jobs. One of the first large Polish neighborhoods was in South

Philadelphia. It was between Pine Street and Washington Avenue, and along the cross streets near Front Street. Later, Polish-Americans moved into other neighborhoods. There was one Polish neighborhood in South Philadelphia between Reed and Wharton Streets in Grays Ferry, and another in Southwest Philadelphia between Glenmore and Woodland Avenues running from 59th to 63rd Streets. There were Polish-American neighborhoods in many other sections of the city, too. Bridesburg, Lower Kensington, Fairmount, Frankford, Port Richmond, Manayunk, Roxborough, and Nicetown all had Polish-American neighborhoods.

At first, Polish immigrants lived in boarding houses where rooms were perhaps only two or three dollars a month. Owning property was very important to the Poles, so most bought their own houses as soon as possible. South Philadelphia row houses cost about $1,000 to $2,000 in 1900, and Polish-Americans were willing to work very hard to own one. They bought only the necessities of life and saved every penny. Because they were willing to make these sacrifices, over half of the immigrants were able to buy homes within ten years of coming here.

JOBS

Many of the first Polish immigrants worked as general laborers, doing jobs few others wanted to do. Polish-Americans were proud of their work, and most worked hard. Soon they moved into better jobs.

Like other immigrants, as soon as they arrived in Philadelphia the Poles had to find work. They needed money to buy food and clothing. They also had to pay for a place to live. Many wanted money to save for their trip home, or to send to their families in Poland. For the Poles, however, working meant more than just getting money. Work was a source of pride, and good work was a source of great pride. Most early Polish-Americans felt this way. They were anxious to work hard when they came to Philadelphia.

Although many Polish immigrants found jobs by themselves, not everyone could. Sometimes a community leader, a priest, or a Polish-American businessman helped them by putting the new immigrants in touch with employers. Other times, Polish immigrants found jobs with relatives' or friends' help. Once in a while, they used New York employment agencies. Poles who landed in New York were often sent to fill jobs in Philadelphia.

At first, most Polish immigrants had to take the worst kinds of jobs. They were jobs that other Americans refused to do. Polish men did not need special skills or training for these jobs. They were jobs that anyone who was strong and was willing to work hard could do. People who did these jobs were called general laborers. General laborers lifted and shoveled. They pushed and carried. They did many jobs that machines do today. The Polish immigrants worked as general laborers in many companies. Some helped make railroad cars for the J. B. Brill Company in Southwest Philadelphia. Some were general laborers at the Atlantic and Sun Oil refineries. Some worked at the Franklin Sugar House in South Philadelphia. Polish men also unloaded ships on the Philadelphia waterfront. Many worked in tanneries. They tanned cowhides and made them into leather. They also worked as general laborers in the construction business. Most Polish workers were proud of their work. They always did their best, no matter what the job was.

Because of this, Polish immigrants were known to be hard, reliable workers. They were willing to do hard physical work, lifting and moving heavy loads without complaining. Employers knew they could depend on the Poles to do a good job. This reputation helped them get jobs. Unfortunately, they only got jobs that no one else wanted.

The few Polish immigrants who had job skills were able to find better jobs. Some worked in the metal and steel industry. Some were carpenters or cabinetmakers. A few owned stores, restaurants, and taverns. Others sold real estate and insurance. A small number of these first Polish immigrants had professional jobs. Most of these were priests, photographers, or musicians.

At first, everyone in Polish families had to work. Women and children worked, too. Polish women often found jobs making paper boxes or cigars in factories. Some worked in textile factories. Some Polish women who worked outside the home were domestic servants, housekeepers, or cleaning women.

Many women preferred to work at home, particularly if they had small children. Sometimes, they did laundry or rented rooms in their houses. A few women worked in grocery, candy, variety, or dry goods stores.

Polish-American immigrants believed in work. They felt that hard work was the key to success. They worked hard. They also wanted their children to work hard. Many Polish children began to work at an early age. While they were in school, they worked part-time. They ran errands and did chores. They cleaned stores and even did small jobs in factories. As soon as they were old enough, many quit school to work with their parents. Teenage boys worked with their fathers in refineries and factories. Teenage girls often helped their mothers with their jobs.

As time went on, many Polish immigrants got more job skills and moved into better jobs. They went from being general laborers to being machine operators. Some became factory foremen. Their children often learned skills in school and worked in Philadelphia's businesses and industries. A number of Polish-Americans became self-employed. Some went to college and became doctors, lawyers, and teachers.

Adjustment to American Life

There were many Polish-Americans ready to help immigrants adjust to life in Philadelphia.

To many Polish immigrants, life in Philadelphia seemed very strange. Many things were different here from the way they had been in Poland. The biggest difference was language. Since most of the immigrants did not speak English, they needed help adjusting. They had to learn how to get along in their new homeland and how to solve new problems. Other Polish-Americans in their neighborhoods were a great help to them. They also made the new Polish immigrants feel at home.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church and the neighborhood parish were important organizations for Polish immigrants. There were special Polish nationality parishes in Philadelphia. They helped Polish-Americans in many ways. They also helped keep Polish ethnic identity strong.

One of the most important organizations for Polish immigrants was the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic Church had always been influential in Polish life. When Poland was ruled by foreigners, the Catholic Church helped the Poles retain their strong Polish national identity. The men and women of the Polish Catholic Church spoke out against foreign rule and encouraged the Poles not to forget their own language or customs. These men and women helped keep Polish culture alive. For Poles, the Catholic Church was more than a religious institution.

In the United States, the immigrants found the Catholic Church different from the way it had been in Poland. The American Catholic churches had few Polish priests. Sermons were in English. Polish saints were not honored. Polish culture was not mentioned. To the Polish immigrants, Philadelphia's Catholic Church was strange. Most Polish immigrants were not comfortable in American Catholic churches and missed the Polish Catholic Church. The Poles wanted a church where the priest spoke Polish. They wanted the saints, ceremonies, and sermons that were familiar to them. They wanted to celebrate Christmas and Easter the way they had in Poland. They wanted special celebrations to honor Our Lady of Czestochowa, the patroness of Poland. They were willing to travel many miles to go to special Polish churches.

Polish-American Catholics petitioned to have special Polish parishes in Polish neighborhoods. They insisted so loudly and so long that they eventually succeeded. They convinced Philadelphia's bishops and cardinals to let them start special Polish parishes. By 1920, there were seven Polish nationality parishes in Philadelphia. One, St. Stanislaus, was in South Philadelphia. Later, an eighth Polish nationality parish, St. Mary of Czestochowa, was started in Southwest Philadelphia. These parishes became the center of Polish-American life.

Philadelphia's Polish parishes served more than religious functions. They also helped immigrants adjust to American life. The priests were not just religious leaders. They advised immigrants on money matters and helped them find health care and jobs. Priests often settled arguments between Polish workers and their bosses. If the immigrants were out of work, priests often got food for them. The priests encouraged the immigrants to form self-help organizations. They set up parish schools so Polish children could get good educations. The parish also sponsored recreational activities such as dances, picnics, and parades for Polish-Americans. It even helped Polish-Americans organize cultural activities like musical programs and plays. The most important thing these parishes did, however, was to help keep Polish ethnic identity strong. As they had done in Poland, the priests and nuns in these parishes encouraged Polish-Americans to be proud of their history and culture. They helped Polish-Americans keep their language and customs alive. They helped them maintain their Polish values, too.

SELF-HELP AND ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS

There were many Polish-American self-help and ethnic organizations in Philadelphia.

Many of the organizations that helped the Polish immigrants were started by the church. Others were independent. Each organization had a different purpose. Some helped immigrants solve economic problems. Mutual aid associations, for example, provided life insurance. By joining a mutual aid association and paying monthly dues, Polish-Americans were able to protect their families in case a worker died. These mutual aid associations also paid family expenses when there was an illness or an accident. Special Polish savings and loan associations helped immigrants borrow money to buy a house, or open a business.

Some Polish-American organizations had political purposes. Members of these groups wanted independence for Poland. These groups also helped people in Poland. Others, such as the Falcons or Eagles Sports Clubs, were sports and physical fitness organizations. Still others had social and cultural purposes. Their goal was to bring Polish-Americans together to preserve and strengthen Polish culture and ethnic identity. Three of the most popular Polish-American organizations were the Polish Roman Catholic Union, the Polish National Alliance, and the Union of Polish Women in America.

EDUCATION

At first, few Polish immigrants were educated and few sent their children to school. Later, education became important in helping Polish-Americans adjust and succeed in America. Many went to Polish Catholic schools where they learned the Polish language, culture, and heritage.

In Poland, work had always been more important than education. The first Polish immigrants felt the same way in the United States. Most immigrant Polish-American families preferred that their children work. Few insisted that their children go to school. Later, Polish-Americans saw the value of education. They believed that going to school could help them live better in America. Polish children began going to school regularly. Most Polish parents wanted their children to go to the Catholic schools in the Polish parishes. These parents wanted their children to learn more than English, reading, and arithmetic. They wanted them to have a religious education and to learn about Polish culture, too. In Polish parish schools children learned all of these things.

At first, many immigrant children had to work to help their families. Because of this, for many education ended in the eighth grade. They did not need to graduate from high school for the jobs they took. Also, their families could not afford to let them stay in school. As late as 1940, fewer than half of Philadelphia's Polish-Americans finished high school. Later, when Polish men and women got better jobs, many families no longer needed their children's wages. Then, more Polish-American children graduated from high school.

In the last 25 years, Polish-Americans have recognized the value of a college education. Even in college, though, they believed their children should learn about the Catholic religion, the Polish language, and Polish culture. Polish-Americans started three colleges in Pennsylvania. The first was St. John's in Philadelphia. It only lasted two years. Two others, Holy Family College of Philadelphia and Alliance College in Cambridge Springs, are still operating today.

Special Polish-language newspapers helped many to adjust to life in America.

NEWSPAPERS

Polish ethnic newspapers helped many people to learn about the United States. There were three in Philadelphia: *Patryota*, *Przyjaciel Ludu*, and *Gwiazda*. These newspapers gave news of the Polish community in the Polish language. They explained American life and customs. They also had special stories about Poland and listed community activities and job openings. Most Polish immigrants read these special newspapers. In fact, they preferred them to American newspapers.

In time, the Polish immigrants adjusted well to American life. They learned to get along in their new homeland. Members of the Philadelphia Polish community, through their special Catholic churches, their many Polish organizations, and their Polish newspapers, helped each other. Most Polish immigrants, have never given up their customs, values, or heritage.

Polish-Americans Today

Today, Philadelphia's Polish-Americans live in many parts of the city. They still keep many of their old customs and traditions alive in order to keep their ethnic identity strong.

Philadelphia's earliest Polish-American immigrants came to the United States in order to escape economic and political hardships. More recent Polish immigrants have come for the same reasons. Some came when the Germans invaded Poland at the beginning of World War II. Others came when the Communists took their country over after the war. These new immigrants were highly educated and skilled. Many were doctors, lawyers, and teachers. Most of them moved into Philadelphia's suburbs. Many of the children and grandchildren of the older immigrants have also moved into the suburbs. There are still some Polish-Americans living in the city's old immigrant neighborhoods, though. In South and Southwest Philadelphia, there are Polish-Americans living in Queen Village, Elmwood, Paschall, and Eastwick.

Signs of Polish-Americans' ethnic identity still remain in these neighborhoods. There are Polish-owned stores, businesses, and offices. There are Polish Catholic churches and parish schools in these communities.

Most Philadelphia Polish-Americans try to keep their ethnic identity strong by preserving their heritage. They celebrate Pulaski Day and Polish Constitution Day. In Philadelphia's Polish-American neighborhoods many people still belong to mutual aid organizations like the Polish National Alliance and the Polish Roman Catholic Union. Some of them still read the Polish newspaper, *Gwiazda*, and listen to Polish language radio programs. Some Polish-Americans keep their ethnic identity strong by keeping their ties with Poland. They send money, food, and clothing to the people still there. They help the Poles who are fighting for political and economic freedom. They want to make life better in Poland, too.

Many of Philadelphia's Polish-Americans keep their ethnic identity strong through old traditions and customs. On Christmas Eve many Polish-Americans still put straw under the table cloth, eat a special twelve-fruit dish, and save a place at the table for a stranger. They still break and share a bread wafer with family and friends. At Easter they still paint Easter eggs and take their Easter baskets to be blessed in church. They have a special Paschal Lamb cake.

Today, Philadelphia's Polish-Americans continue to eat traditional foods like kielbasa, sauerkraut, and pierogi. They continue to dance the polka. Many continue to speak Polish. They still send their children to Catholic parish schools. They still teach them the traditional values of hard work, independence, and ethnic pride.

Today, Philadelphia's Polish-Americans are more aware than ever before of their contributions to American life. They take great pride in their ethnic identity. They enjoy being Polish and are glad they have a strong, rich heritage. They want to pass that heritage on to their children and grandchildren.

Polish-American Heritage

The rich, strong heritage of Philadelphia's Polish-Americans is made up of many things. People, customs, and culture are all important parts. Although Polish-American heritage has its roots in the past, many of its traditions continue today. This heritage is a source of pride to Philadelphia's Polish-American community.

Polish-Americans are proud of famous Poles from the past who have contributed to this heritage. They are proud of great scientists like Nicolaus Copernicus, the astronomer, and Marie Sklodowska Curie, who was one of the first people ever to work with radioactivity. They are proud of the accomplishments of Frederic Chopin, composer; Joseph Conrad, author; Ignace Paderewski, pianist and statesman; and Thaddeus Kosciuszko and Casimir Pulaski, American patriots.

Philadelphia's Polish-Americans are also proud of famous Poles who contribute to Polish heritage today. Lech Walesa and Pope John Paul II are outstanding examples. Philadelphia's Polish-Americans are especially proud of these two world leaders. They are also proud of well-known American leaders such as Edmund Muskie, former Senator and Secretary of State; Zbigniew Brzezinski, former Secretary of Defense; and Representative Daniel Rostenkowski.

There are other famous Polish-American leaders, too. There are Polish-Americans like Stan Musial, Carl Yastrzemski, and Greg Luzinski, who are leaders in sports. There are Polish-Americans like Liberace, Bobby Vinton, and Ted Knight, who are leading entertainers.

There are also many Philadelphia Polish-American leaders. Philadelphia's Polish-Americans are especially proud of them. They are proud of John Cardinal Krol, Archbishop of Philadelphia. They are proud of Ron Jaworski of the Eagles, and of Tom Gola, former basketball star and city leader. They admire the accomplishments of leading Polish-American businessmen like Edward Piszek of Mrs. Paul's Kitchens, Frank Piasecki of Piasecki Aircraft Corporation, and Dr. Walter Golaski, inventor. The achievements of these men and women have made American life better. This makes Philadelphia's Polish-Americans especially proud.

Philadelphia's Polish-Americans are also proud of the way they keep Polish customs alive in the city. They are proud of their old customs at Christmas and Easter. They take pride in the fact that their children and grandchildren still eat kielbasa, pierogi, and beet soup. They are proud that people still dance the polka and learn to speak Polish. These customs are part of Polish-American heritage. Polish-Americans believe it is important to keep that heritage.

The most important part of Polish-American heritage is not easily seen, however. It is not the famous Polish names, or the important Polish churches or the Polish ethnic organizations. It is not the Easter customs, newspapers, or polka music. The most important part of Polish-American heritage is how Polish people live their lives. It is what they say and what they do. It is what they believe that is important. It is what they value. It is their attitude toward themselves and toward the world.

The Polish immigrants brought their values, attitudes, and beliefs with them from Poland. They kept them strong and tried not to change them to fit America. They kept them so strong that many of these attitudes, values, and beliefs were adopted by other Americans.

What are these values, attitudes, and beliefs that are so important to Polish-Americans? One is respect for religion and the Catholic Church. Polish-Americans believe strongly in God and in the power of prayer. Many are very religious and some let faith guide their lives.

Another important Polish-American value is love of the land and pride in owning property. They know how hard Poles worked to own land in Poland. They know how, in Poland, they often were thrown off their land. They know how hard their parents and grandparents worked in America, too. Today, most Polish-Americans own their own homes. They worked hard to get them and they work hard today to keep them up. The belief in hard work is also an important Polish-American value. Most believe their parents and grandparents were successful because of hard work. They believe they will succeed through hard work, too. They do not expect to get something for nothing.

Polish-Americans also believe in having a close family. Often family members live near each other. Some even live in the same neighborhood. Some share the same house. They visit one another often, too. They feel it is important to keep families close to each other. Closeness makes it easier for families to help each other.

Love of freedom is probably the oldest and strongest Polish-American value. It is also one of the most important parts of Polish-American heritage. The history of Poland is a history of fighting for freedom. One invader after another took away Polish freedom. The Poles fought one invader after another to regain it. Their love of freedom keeps many Poles fighting today. Love of freedom brought many Poles to America. Love of freedom caused many Polish-Americans to fight bravely in all of America's wars. And their love of freedom makes most Polish-Americans love America. Their love of freedom is the reason why most Polish-Americans strongly support our government. Polish-Americans are very patriotic and they are quick to show their love of this country.

Some might say that these attitudes, beliefs, and values are old-fashioned and out-of-date. The Polish-Americans who hold them do not feel this way. Polish-Americans feel that they have contributed much to the American way of life because of these attitudes, beliefs, and values. They feel that people in all ethnic groups should share these values, attitudes, and beliefs because they make America strong.

History, Heritage, and Hearsay: Other Ethnic Groups in Your Neighborhood

Philadelphia is a multiethnic city. This means that there are many, many different ethnic groups living in our city's neighborhoods. This book helped you learn about five Philadelphia ethnic groups:

- Afro-Americans
- Irish-Americans
- Italian-Americans
- Jewish-Americans
- Polish-Americans

You can find out about other Philadelphia ethnic groups by yourself. You can find out their history, heritage, and hearsay.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- How many ethnic groups are there in Philadelphia?
- How would you find out about these groups?

Plan how to investigate other ethnic groups.

HERE

1. Choose an ethnic group to investigate. Choose one that is not in this book. Choose one that lives in our city.
2. Make a list of things to find out about the group. Use this sample list or make up your own list.
    - *Background*—Why is this group an ethnic group?
    - *Reasons for Coming to the United States and to*

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Philadelphia—Why did members of the group come here?

- *Early History*—What is the group's history in America before they began coming here in large numbers?
- *Early Experiences*—What happened to members of the ethnic group during their first years in this city?
- *Neighborhoods*—Where did members of the ethnic group live when they came? Where do they live now?
- *Jobs*—What kind of jobs did they have when they first came? What are their jobs now?
- *Adjustment to American Life*—How did the members of this ethnic group adapt their customs and lifestyles?
- *Mutual Aid*—How did members of the ethnic group help each other adjust?
- *Religion*—What role did religion play in the ethnic group members' lives when they first came? What role does it play now?
- *Education*—What role did education play in their life when they first came? What role does it play now?
- *Heritage*—What things about their culture are important to members of the ethnic group? What traditions did they bring to Philadelphia? What contributions have they made to our city?

3. Decide where to find out the answers to these questions. You will probably find out the answers in different places. You may find out the answers best by asking members of the ethnic group.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Will the experiences of all ethnic groups in Philadelphia be similar or different? Why?

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Investigate another ethnic group.

1. Do research to find the information that you want about the ethnic group. Go to the library. Go to City Hall and visit the city archives. If possible, visit the neighborhoods where members of the ethnic group live. Talk to members of the ethnic group. Talk to people who know a lot about the ethnic group.
2. Find out the answers to your questions.

THINK ABOUT THIS

- Where did you find out most of the answers to your questions?

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Do these alone or with others.

Interview someone from the ethnic group.

1. Choose an older person, if possible.
2. Use your oral history interview forms and outlines.
3. Find out their personal history.

Make your own *History, Heritage, and Hearsay*.

1. Write about the history of the ethnic group. Write about their heritage, too. Include an oral history for the "hearsay." Use *History, Heritage, and Hearsay* for ideas.
2. Include drawings or photographs. Add maps or other things to look at.
3. Make a book. Staple the pages together. Make a cover, if you like.
4. Share your book with others. Share it with members of the ethnic group. Share it with your friends and family.

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